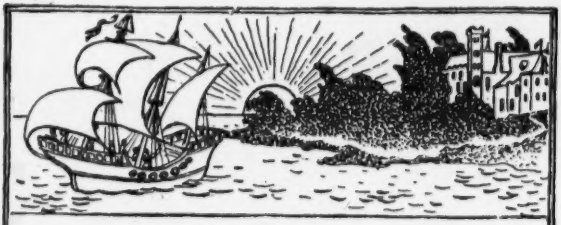
# THE ISLAND IMPOSSIBLE

*He 's asleep in the poppy beds, they say,*
*He has been so busy the livelong day,*
*And now he is fast in slumber deep*
*In the field where the poppies close vigil keep.*
*But I have been there myself, I say,*
*And have noticed a wonderful, broad highway,*
*Whose borders are fair with flowers, that blow*
*Beyond the field where the poppies grow.*

* * *

*I think, with his comrades, hand in hand,*
*He has gone away to a larger land*
*Under the sunlight and moonlight and stars.*
*They have broken through the encircling bars*
*Which guard us, prisoners, from secrets deep,*
*Whose keys are kept in the Country of Sleep.*
*And he 's off on the highway grand, I know,*
*That crosses the field where the poppies grow.*



# THE ISLAND IMPOSSIBLE

By

Harriet Morgan

Illustrated by

Katharine Pyle

Boston.
Little, Brown & Co.
1899.

*Copyright, 1899,*
BY LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

*All rights reserved.*

University Press:
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

UTOPIA
RBR
M848I

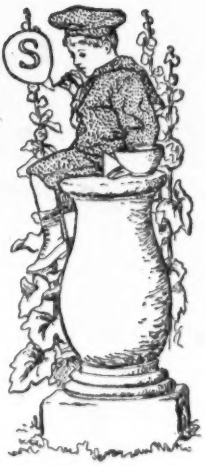
Inscribed to

TOM MURPHY,

JACK O'NORY'S

CLOSEST COMRADE, FAITHFULLEST FRIEND.

# CONTENTS




| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| I | The Island Impossible | 1 |
| II | In the Maple-sugar Forest | 12 |
| III | In Charge of the Light-house | 31 |
| IV | At a South American Port | 48 |
| V | In the Convalescent Ward | 70 |
| VI | Jurors | 89 |
| VII | On the Great Desert | 106 |
| VIII | At the Queen's Drawing-room | 133 |
| IX | The Rescue | 142 |
| X | Amongst the Hop-pickers | 157 |
| XI | Commissioners | 178 |
| XII | Auf Wiedersehen | 195 |
| | L'Envoi | 207 |

# LIST *of* Illustrations

From Drawings by
KATHARINE PYLE


"JACK O'NORY FELL ASLEEP IN THE FIELD WHERE THE POPPIES GROW" . . . . *Frontispiece*

"THEIR BURDENS WERE THROWN ON TO THE BLAZING COALS" . . . . . *Page* 18

"SO THE NURSES AND THE THREE LITTLE CONVALESCENTS BEGAN TO DANCE A JIG" " 86

"ONE MAN WHO WAS LYING ON THE GROUND, SUDDENLY SAT UP" . . . . . " 130

"SO AT LAST THEY CAME DOWN TO THE PIER, GORGEOUS" . . . . . " 179

# THE ISLAND IMPOSSIBLE

## CHAPTER I

### THE ISLAND IMPOSSIBLE

JACK O'NORY fell asleep in the field where the poppies grow.

. . . . . .

"Do you think the other children will consent?" said Jack O'Nory.

Rosey Pink said she did n't know why they should not consent, and Tom Murphy said he did n't know what they were to consent about.

"Neither do I," said Rosey Pink.

Then Jack O'Nory explained: "Why, you two children and I are going to live

on that beautiful Island, which is so near the shore of the city that we can build a short bridge, and never have to use a boat for coming or for going, — but we must have the other children, too, — and Anno. Then, if Anno comes, Roscoe will surely come, and he could do the hard work while we could help Anno to take care of us; and Mr. Rattles and Remus could keep their boats at our wharf. You remember that there is a lovely bay farther back, and we would own the Island, and live on it, and grow up on it."

"But what about the fathers and the mothers and the dear auntie?"

"That 's all right," said Jack, "they will certainly consent."

"Why, Jack," said Tom, "that will be the most beautiful thing we have ever done," — and Rosey Pink clapped her hands and danced upon her toes.

"They are coming now," she cried, — "all the children; and Anno is along, and oh! I will go and tell them!"

How pleased they were — Ernest and Calleen and Mary and Jeanne, and Sam Holmes. Anno said she would call Roscoe. Then they all ran

down to the wharves and found Mr. Rattles and Remus Rattles, who immediately consented to give up their berth at the wharf of the city, and to begin at once to build a boat-house on the little bay which ran into the Island.

The fathers and the mothers and the dear auntie objected; but the children made such beautiful promises that they at last gave their consent, insisting, however, that a school-house should be built on the Island, — in which the children should live, — and that every Sunday they should come over to the city on the Continent to church.

"Make the school-house a college instead," said Jack O'Nory, "for we will grow up, and we must have all the education possible. We are going to live on the Island forever."

"And we promise," said all the children, "to come over to the Continent on Sundays and go to church."

The fathers and the mothers and the dear auntie said a great many times, to a great many propositions, "That is impossible;" but in the end they all agreed that the children should become islanders; and these elders looked very wise as they nodded to each other and said very low,

"It will be just going to boarding-school, you know, for there must be a professor and a professor's wife, and the children must live in the school;" and it was decided that other boys and girls should come over from the Continent to day-school, and to college, — when everybody was old enough to make it a college.

"Only," said the children, "they must never come any farther than the college, — never inside of the Island, for that is ours."

Then the fathers and the mothers and the dear auntie decided that there should be a professor for the college, and a professor's wife, and that the children must live in the college.

"All right," said the children; "but we must have our own rooms and our own table, and Anno will wait on us and Roscoe will do the hard work."

The elders were greatly pleased that Anno was to be with them, so immediately the college was built, and the bridge; and a great many laws and rules were made, one of which was that no day-scholar crossing the bridge to the college must ever go anywhere on the Island, unless she was invited.

"Or he," suggested Tom Murphy.

Then there was a great time, — the elders furnishing every room in the college, and the children taking over all their belongings. Jack O'Nory and Tom Murphy seemed to have more pieces of paper and paints and pencils for their artist work than you could put into a bushel basket.

And Calleen had lots of prints of broken arms and legs, and thigh-bones and ankle-bones, and badly made hearts and livers, — just such things as one sees in a medical museum, for medical work was her bent, — though one of the children said it was a curious thing to talk of Calleen's bent, when she certainly was as straight as a stick.

Jeanne insisted that she was to be a musician, but as she had not a note of written music in her possession, nothing was carried over which could show any furthering of her intentions.

When Mary was asked what particular kind of bent she was to follow, which might mean some particular kind of belonging to be moved over, she said she had no particular kind of belongings, because her intention was to be a house-mother.

"So also is mine," said Sam Holmes; and as

Sam was always ready to follow Mary's lead, it seemed quite natural that his vocation also was to be that of a house-mother.

Ernest had a lot of engineering drawings; and as for Rosey Pink, she did not seem to have any desire for belongings of any kind, — her business was to do whatever Tom Murphy and Jack O'Nory did, and to be ordered about by them at a moment's notice.

Of course everybody knew what Anno's business was, — which was to do everything and attend to everybody and think of everything, and put as much work as was possible upon Roscoe's shoulders; while Roscoe was simply her shadow, and you may be sure he had work enough in sight, — and the fathers and the mothers and the dear auntie loaded him with all kinds of packages and all sorts of advice.

The professor and the professor's wife, who were to live in the college, left the children free to make their own arrangements; and so the life on the beautiful Island began.

But at the table, where they were all assembled a few days after taking possession, it was decided that the Island must have a name.

Calleen said she had heard some of the day-

scholars making fun of the inhabitants and calling them the "Robinson Cruso-ers."

Tom Murphy said that was n't a bad name, and it would do very well, but it was not exactly original, and it was time they had some other name than "inhabitants," and certainly the beautiful Island deserved to have a name of its own.

Then there was uncertainty as to the means of christening it. The boys thought there ought to be champagne, as all the ships were christened with champagne, — and this Island ought to have the same honor that a ship of war has, and certainly should be christened in the same way.

Ernest said, "In the first place, we have n't any champagne, and it would hardly do to christen the Island with milk or lemonade or soda-water or ginger-pop."

Rosey Pink interrupted to say that she thought ginger-pop would be as good as champagne. But Ernest went on speaking without noticing the interruption.

"In the second place," he said, "one of our most beautiful new battleships was christened the other day with pure spring water."

"Just as they christen a baby," interjected Jeanne.

The opinion of all the children was immediately expressed, — that clear spring water was the very thing to use, and there was a beautiful spring of clear water just at the foot of the hill.

"And we must go to the top of the hill and christen it," said Jack O'Nory; "and we must plant a long pole there, and put up a United States flag that can be seen far out at sea."

"Jack will certainly be a sailor man," said Mary, "he is so fond of the sea."

"Oh no! never," said Rosey Pink.

Jack said that when they all went on their expeditions, that would be the first land they should see, coming back; so they took a crystal vase with them and started out to christen the Island. When they came to the spring they filled the vase with clear water. Roscoe and Mr. Rattles and Remus Rattles had joined them, carrying the long pole from which the United States flag was to float: and Anno took charge of the vase of water, thinking it would go more safely up the hill in her hands than in any of those smaller hands which were in such a hurry now.

"But what about the flag?" said the children.

Mr. Rattles said that he had brought the boat-house flag with him, because he had another smaller one stowed away in a locker, which would do for the boat-house.

"What shall the name of the Island be?" was the next question.

After a little silence, while everybody was looking at everybody else, Mary suggested that as the elders had said so many times to so many propositions, "That will be impossible," it would be a good thing to call the Island "The Island Impossible."

Rosey Pink cried out, "Yes, yes, let us call it 'The Island Impossible,' and Jack O'Nory shall christen it."

"No, indeed," said Jack O'Nory; "this Island is exactly like a ship, and so a girl must christen it — girls always christen ships."

So it was decided that they should all form a ring, and the eldest girl, who was Mary, and who was about a month older than some of the others, should throw the water, while everybody should cry out, "Island Impossible!" "Good luck!" "Besides, Mary ought to do it," said Sam Holmes, "for it is she who thought of the name."

So they formed a circle, and while Mary was throwing the water on the ground every child shouted out, "Island Impossible, we wish you good luck!"

Then Mr. Rattles took some strong cord out of his pocket and fixed it to the end of the pole, and Remus and Roscoe helped him to dig a place for the pole; and after it was fixed steadily in the ground, they put the cord through the place for it in the flag, and they hoisted up the flag, while everybody shouted "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

After it was over Jeanne asked if they thought the Continental children, who called them the Robinson Cruso-ers, would now call them the "Island Impossiblers."

It was decided that they would not let any one know about this new name for their Island; and as it was to be a secret, they supposed that, after all, they would have to be contented with the name "inhabitants."

"And why not," said Ernest; "when discoverers land on an island they always call the people who come to meet them 'the inhabitants;' so that will do for us."

The children began now, in the afternoons

when school was over, to go on so many expeditions in the boats, — sometimes also pretty late on moonlight nights, — that Mr. Rattles and Remus came near having nervous prostration, having to work so hard with sailing and rowing; and these two people would many times fall asleep, — sometimes when they were quite far out to sea, — so that the children very soon learned to manage the boats themselves.

## CHAPTER II

### IN THE MAPLE-SUGAR FOREST

"THERE 'S a day's and a night's business waiting for you children, if you choose to take it," said Mr. Rattles.

Mary asked, "What is the business, Mr. Rattles?"

The children were all sitting about on the beach, for it was a holiday, and though it was very early in the spring, the day was warm, and there was a smell of spring-time in the air. The little waves were coming in to the shore laden with a song, and the sun was shining everywhere.

"Well, you see, my brother owns that Island, which is covered with a maple forest, and it is time for the sugar-boiling. Last year he had helpers, — one is obliged to have helpers at maple-sugar time, — but they behaved so badly, and were the cause of so much loss to him, that he told them they should never work for

him again. Now they are his enemies, and they have formed a plan to go and empty out all the sap which has been flowing into the vessels set to catch it. Then, of course, he would have no maple sugar or maple syrup, and would lose about one thousand dollars."

"Are n't there other helpers to be hired?" asked Ernest.

"Yes; but these bad men would immediately hear of that, and would at once go and empty away the sap. What I want to do for him is to have you children go there to-day and to-night. Remus and I, and Anno and Roscoe, would go with you. Then, you see, by dark all the sap could be gathered, and we could set to work boiling the sap down to molasses. There would not be time to boil it down to sugar, but it could easily be turned to syrup; and with my brother's boat and our two boats we could bring the syrup to his home on the Continent, where he could finish his boiling without molestation, and so save his whole crop."

"But, Mr. Rattles," said Jack O'Nory, "what is to prevent his enemies from going there to-night and emptying out his sap. *We* could n't drive them away."

"To-night they have another job, quite inland, and so far away from the Maple Island that they could not possibly see the light of the fires; and they feel safe, for they know one cannot gather the sap and make the sugar without helpers, and they know that my brother has not engaged helpers."

"We 'll go," said the children.

"And right away," said Calleen, rising to her feet.

"Well, this is a business matter," Mr. Rattles went on to say in a very drawley tone, which was not fair, just as he had succeeded in rousing the children to a great impatience. "My brother says that he can't take helpers unless the helpers will take pay."

"Pay," said all the children. "Oh! never."

"I allowed it would be so," said Mr. Rattles; "but I don't know what my brother can do if you won't go. He will lose all his crop, and if you *do* consent, it will take the whole crowd of us to get through gathering the sap before night-fall."

"But pay, Mr. Rattles; you know we can't do that," said Jack O'Nory.

Mr. Rattles was chewing a piece of stick, and

he did not immediately answer. Remus Rattles spoke up and said: —

"Why not let Uncle Sam build us a new boat-house; we want one, and that would n't be pay."

"All right," said the children, "we will take the new boat-house. Hurrah for Mr. Sam Rattles, and hurrah for this new business!"

They all got into the two boats and rowed away to the maple-sugar forest, looking so like a party of people going to a picnic, that even if they had met those bad helpers, the helpers would not for a moment imagine that they were working-people who were going to cheat *them* out of their very wicked revenge.

Soon the whole party were in the maple forest, and when they saw the number of trees they almost lost heart, for how could they ever empty the sap which had been flowing from all those trees, and carry it in pails to the great fire which would be built for the sugar-boiling.

But Mr. Sam Rattles arranged everything splendidly. He counted that with Remus and Anno there would be five boys and five girls, and then his brother and himself with Roscoe would make three strong men.

A boy and a girl should each take a different

piece of ground with their pails for emptying; then each detachment should set its pails at a given spot, and the three strong men, Mr. Rattles, Mr. Sam Rattles, and Roscoe, should carry the pails over to the boiling-kettles and bring them back to be filled again. And it *was* amazing to see how much work was done by the busy helpers, so that the sun was really low in the sky before they began to be hungry and to be glad of the delicious sandwiches and the fresh milk which the owner of all this wealth had furnished for them; and before sunset there was only a small patch of the forest to be finished. The children joined together for that patch, and said they could easily carry the pails, as there would be so many of them in the one place. So the three men lighted the fires for boiling.

Mr. Sam Rattles knew that by this time all the bad helpers had gone inland to the other maple forest.

"Have you tasted the sap?" said Tom Murphy.

"Yes," answered Jack O'Nory. "I tasted it, thinking that it would be at least sweet, if it *was* as thin as water. Instead of sweet, I call

it bitter, and very nasty. Do you suppose they put sugar in it when they boil it?"

"No indeed," interrupted Calleen. "It is just this sap which makes the maple sugar. I know, for I was once in a country, with the dear auntie, where the Indians make the maple sugar, and I tasted it then, and was very disappointed. So I know about it."

But pretty soon the last pailful was gathered, and the children trooped over the ground carrying the pails and guarding their precious freight, from risk of spilling, by being very careful about stepping over old roots and blackberry vines and low impeding bushes.

And then how beautiful it was when they reached the boiling place and saw three immense kettles hung from stakes over the fires, and how important they felt when they discovered that the *whole* business of keeping the fires up was to be theirs, as the three men from this time out must be busy with the boiling.

The night had fallen, and there was no moon; but how far the light of these glowing fires extended! Indeed it seemed to the children that the whole island was lighted up, and they could see the sticks and broken branches which

were needed to feed those monster fires much more easily than if it had been daylight, and it was easy to see which down-reaching branches were brittle and easily broken. But the helpers had to work very hard and were really earning their new boat-house, for the fires were truly monsters, with appetites that were never satisfied; and the moment the children advanced with their sheaves of dry wood, their burdens were thrown on to the blazing coals, and such a stirring with long poles was going on now that Mr. Rattles and his brother and Roscoe had faces almost as red as the coals.

Mr. Sam Rattles said, "Now, children, if you can make a spurt and bring double the quantity of fuel on this bout, you will have time to stop over one journey and eat some bread and syrup. I have brought the bread with me, and although we have not yet the thick syrup, it is sufficiently boiled to be very good."

So the helpers started off with new strength to do double work. The thought of a rest was delightful, although they hardly put much faith in the idea that the tasteless sap they had been so busy about could be really good for anything as syrup.

But it *was good*, — "delicious," the helpers said, and they did n't think it could be much better even when it *should* be thicker. And when they went to work again, their task was lighter, for Mr. Sam Rattles said it would not be necessary to bring so much fuel now. Slower fires were better when the sap was beginning to thicken. Mr. Rattles said to his brother: —

"Why not wait and boil it down to sugar here?" But Mr. Sam Rattles said there would be danger that way, for they would have to go on boiling till six o'clock in the morning, which would be daylight, and then the sugar could not be moved until it was quite cold; and after all this work the enemies might come and take all the sugar, which would be worse than taking the sap. As it was now, the fires could be put out by four o'clock, and the syrup could be carried to the boats in the large covered pails; and indeed by four o'clock the syrup was so thick that it was splendid, and one hundred pails of it were standing in the cool morning air waiting for transportation.

The three strong men were obliged to make forty trips between the boats and the kettles before it was all embarked, so it was very wise

of Mr. Sam Rattles to have thought of that, and to have made his fires so near the boat-landing.

When it came time for rowing the cargo over to the Continent, Mr. Rattles made some demur about leaving the children without him, and yet there was no one who could manage the sail-boat and take care of the sugar at the same time, and Remus would have to help him with the sail.

The children told him not to fear for them; they would be very comfortable till the boats should return; "and," they said, "there are no wild beasts on the Island. So, good-bye, Mr. Rattles;" and then they began to sing "Good-bye, John, don't stay long," and Mr. Rattles, whose name was John, went off, smiling, to the boat.

"And now, what shall we do?" said the children.

"Anno, you will have to be the bravest, because you are grown up."

"I don't feel brave at all," said Anno. "I did n't know that it would be so lonesome after the men should go; but it *is* lonesome."

"That 's the truth," said Rosey Pink. "And the fires are nearly dead out, and it is very dark,

and growing colder. Shall we keep up one of the fires?"

Anno said, "Better not, for in some way the enemies might have come back from the other sugar-boiling, and if they saw a light they would come over to the Island."

The boys said it was all nonsense for the girls to be afraid of the dark, and although it was growing pretty cold, that was because they were sitting still; better get up and run about.

"Seems to me," said Ernest, "that we have had enough of running about since we came here."

And Sam Holmes agreed "that was so," and suggested that they had better all huddle up together and tell stories in order to keep each other warm. But nobody seemed to be in the humor for telling stories, and it *was* cold.

An hour passed away. Certainly it was time for the boats to come back, and the dawn had come into the sky. The tired children were glad to hear oars striking the water. Tom Murphy and Jack O'Nory ran out from behind the patch of bushes which screened them from the bay to see the boats, but they came back trembling with excitement.

"There is just one boat, and there are six men in it."

"The enemies," said all the others.

"The enemies, and what shall *we* do?" said Anno.

Calleen said, "Anno, you are more frightened than any of the rest of us, and you are the biggest."

"I am frightened," Anno said.

Tom and Jack said the men in the boat were not coming down to the place from which *their* boats had pushed off; they were going to land just where they had landed when they started to gather in the sap.

"So we will have time to hide," said Rosey Pink.

"Where?"

"In the trees."

"Sure enough, in the trees," assented all the children.

Then it was decided that only two children should go into each tree, so as not to attract the attention of the men, should they come to this place; and all those rapid climbers soon arranged themselves. Rosey Pink insisted upon climbing into the same tree with Tom and Jack,

because there was an uneven number, and it would not do for any one of them to occupy a tree all to herself.

"Or himself," said Jack.

"Are you all comfortable," asked Anno out of her tree, where she was perched up with Mary.

Jeanne said *she* was not comfortable; her foot had caught in a crotch, and she could n't get it out, and most likely by the time the robbers got there, she would be so far from comfortable that she would have to tumble out head first.

So Ernest, who was in the same tree, came down a notch, and pulled Jeanne's foot out of its prison, and by that time they heard the robbers calling to each other and saying, "Sold!"

Jack O'Nory said, "They will soon be coming this way, so no more laughing or complaining in the camp."

Calleen said, "What if we should sneeze?"

Silence fell on all the tenants of the trees, and they heard the steps of "the enemies" coming nearer and nearer.

"Sam Rattles has boiled his sugar," said a voice directly beneath Rosey Pink, "for here are the kettles."

"But how in the world did he get time to empty all that sap and boil the sugar without helpers. It was all safe enough this morning, for I reconnoitred when he was absent, and I made sure we would have it all our own way if we could get here by this hour this morning."

"Well, you see that evidently he has had it *his* own way."

"There has not been time for him to make the sugar," said another voice, "and the fires are almost out."

Then the six men came forward and surrounded the kettles.

"Only syrup," said one; "pretty thick at that. He must have taken it all away in the shape of syrup. You can see that there is no sugar here."

"A rather sharp trick," drawled out another voice.

The strange birds in the trees found it hard to keep quiet. It would have been so comfortable to have a hearty laugh at the expense of "the enemies," of whom, nevertheless, they were deadly afraid.

"Well, I don't think there is anything to be done about it," said one enemy.

"The kettles," said another.

"Yes, to be sure, the kettles."

"And they are very good ones."

"It would be a grand revenge to take them away with us."

"No way to take them."

"That's so; the boat is small and they are unwieldy, and there are three of them."

"I'll tell you what: let's hide them, and come back for them with a large boat to-night. We can sell them for a pretty penny."

"Agreed. All lend a hand, and we can hide them."

"But where?"

"To be sure, where? He'll be back by sunrise and hunt the Island for them. He knows every hole and corner of this forest."

The drawley voice said, "Better sink them in shallow water."

That idea appeared to be pleasing to the whole band of "enemies," and pretty soon they had dispersed and were sounding the water along the shore.

"I have a very bad crick in my neck," said Calleen. "I shall have to get out of my tree in order to rub it out."

"Calleen, be quiet," said Ernest; "they will be coming back immediately."

But Calleen slipped down out of the tree.

"Oh, it feels delightful to be on land again, and I certainly am going to follow and see what place they are choosing for the kettles."

All the other children commanded her to climb into her tree again, but in vain. Then Jack O'Nory said: —

"One of us must follow her. Tom; she must not be allowed to go alone. I will go, and if I need your help I will whistle."

Pretty soon Jack joined Calleen, and they went creeping through the bushes, ready to crouch down if the men should turn and look back.

The children could hear their voices as they walked along the shore. One of the men said: —

"Here is a good place; just about four feet deep. Rattles will never think of looking for them here."

"Yes," said another voice. "This is a jolly place, and we can easily get them to-night. It will be a good revenge for us, and a good prize, as the kettles are new and expensive. But I

wish we had come sooner and emptied out his crop."

"Whom do you suppose he could find to help him? for he has not engaged any of the men who make it their business."

A third voice said: —

"It has just struck me, from a little thing I saw, that he *may* have employed children."

"Oh! nonsense, Pete. What children could possibly do such work as that, and in less than a day? And what did you see?"

"Just nothing but a little bow of ribbon that looks as if it had come off of a girl's hair."

"Pete has a high old imagination," said another man.

Calleen and Jack turned very quietly and made their way behind the screening bushes back to the open, near which the other trees full of these new birds were standing.

Calleen climbed up like a squirrel into her place, while Jack was very glad to get back to his. There was not much time for talk, for they knew that the men, who were sounding the water with a long pole, would be returning right away.

It was very silent in the maple-sugar camp,

and almost immediately the enemies came back and began to carry away the kettles, two men carrying a kettle between them.

"Where is your 'girl's hair-ribbon,' Pete?" said one of them.

"There it is, caught on the bush at your side."

"Sure enough, that's what it is, and it smells as sweet as any flower; but I can't imagine little girls as helping in this kind of work. If Sam Rattles could n't do any better than have children to help him, he would not have had pails of syrup by this time. I just suppose some little girl of his acquaintance was along, — and I suppose a sonsie little lassie, — but who *were* his helpers it is hard to say."

Then the men started off carrying the kettles, and pretty soon the children heard their voices turning inland from the shore.

"They have *drowned* the kettles," said Calleen, "and they are crossing the Island to get to the place where they left their boat. Let's get down."

"No," said Anno; "wait awhile, one of them might come back."

"To see about that hair-ribbon," suggested Tom.

"Whose was it, any way?" said Sam Holmes.

"Mine," said Mary; "for my hair is all untied."

Soon the children heard the sound of oars, and they all climbed down from their perches, and began praising each other because nobody had coughed or sneezed, and so got the whole party into trouble. Their anxiety now was lest "the enemies" should meet the returning boats; but a whole hour passed, and it was daylight before Mr. Rattles and his party returned.

They told the children that they had had trouble getting a wagon to carry the syrup up to Sam Rattles' house, as they had landed at an unfrequented place, for fear of attracting attention.

"Good that you did, Mr. Sam Rattles," said Ernest, "for 'the enemy' has been here."

Then there was great amazement and many questions, and a great deal of commendation bestowed upon the children for their presence of mind in getting into the trees; and Mr. Sam Rattles was lavish in his thanks to Calleen, through whose courage they were now able to find the place where the kettles were hidden; but the other Mr. Rattles shook his head and said that Calleen was a very foolhardy young

lady, and what would the people on the Continent say if they could know of the danger to which the children had been subjected.

The whole troop set off to inspect the place where the kettles were "drowned," as Calleen said, and everybody was eager to see them taken out of the water again.

But the men agreed that the only way was to row two of the boats over to their anchorage and lift them in. Mr. Rattles said that Remus might bring the small boat around, and Sam Rattles would have his also there, and there would be plenty of room for the three kettles; but he, for his part, was going now to take his whole party home in the sail-boat, and he hoped this night's adventures would not be the cause of whooping-coughs or croups or "locked jaws," on their part.

The children promised to steer clear of all these delightful complaints, but they insisted that their boat should go round with the others to see the embarkation of the kettles.

When they started for home Mr. Sam Rattles said: —

"It shall be a beautiful boat-house, with bath-houses attached."

## CHAPTER III

### IN CHARGE OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE

"I WISH we were in the sail-boat," said Tom Murphy, "for then we might go across the sea. Rowing is slow work."

"The little sail is right here under my foot," said Rosey Pink, who was managing the rudder. "Remus Rattles left it in here the day he went fishing with his father; you know he never takes anything out."

"Good for you, Rosey. What do you say, Jack? Shall we hoist the little sail and go across the sea?"

"Of course we shall. Let her go for a minute, Rosey, while we put it up. I did n't even know that the Rattles' firm *owned* a sail for the row-boat."

"Mr. Rattles made it only four days ago," said Rosey Pink.

So very soon these mariners hoisted sail and headed out to sea, — a sea as quiet as their own harbor, and tinted with beautiful changing

colors; overhead the blue sky with its sleepy little white clouds, looking so good-humored that they seemed to take the place of comrades interested in the doings of these sailors, and ready for their share of whatever should be going on.

So on and on over the sea they sailed, and pretty soon they saw in the distance a light-house, and set their sail for it. As they came towards it, Rosey Pink said, "I don't think it is exactly the Eddystone Light-house, for it is not very much like the pictures, but I know it is some celebrated light-house." And the boys agreed that it must be a celebrated one; it looked as if it might be celebrated.

Sailing along in the smooth water, pretty soon they reached the little pier and landed, but nobody came out from the light-house to see about them, so they moored their boat and made their way round till they came to an open door, which they entered. A woman was ironing, and a little girl was sitting beside the ironing-table watching her — a quite small little girl, much younger than Rosey Pink.

"Well, you *did* give me a start," said the woman, raising her eyes from her work and setting the iron down on its rest. "Who in the

world could dream of three children suddenly walking into a light-house, and without giving any notice of their coming. Did you fall out of the sky?"

"No," said Jack O'Nory. "We rose out of the sea, but no one came to the front door to meet us, so we wandered round to this door."

The woman said that people who lived in light-houses never *were* in the habit of expecting visitors. Since they had come, they were all welcome to a seat; but as for her, she was too busy to pay them much attention. Then she sent her little girl, whom she called Isadora, to call her father.

When the little girl came back with her father, *he* appeared to be much pleased. He said, "Bridget, the fates are with us to-day instead of being against us, as they generally are, for I really was greatly perplexed, casting about in my mind how I could possibly feel it right to go away and leave the place unprotected."

"Unprotected," said his wife. "You could leave the place a year without any one coming near it, except the Light-house Board."

"And they might appear this very day, for all we know."

"No fear of that; it isn't six weeks since their last visit, and they are not due for another six weeks. Perhaps you think it such an inviting place that they may come unexpectedly on a picnic."

"Well, that is neither here nor there, but you see (turning to the children) we are obliged to go away to-day for a little while. My wife's grandfather has just died, and has left everything he owned to her. We must be at the funeral, and we must be present at the reading of the will. We will come back before dark, or, at any rate, *I* will. I am not sure about the wife and daughter. If you children could stay until I come back it would be a great kindness to me."

The children all said that to stay would be about the most pleasant thing they could possibly do. They had never been anywhere near a light-house, except on the outside, and then only a very small one; and to really live in a light-house for an hour or two, and go up the stairs and see the lantern, and look away out to sea, would be a delightful thing to do.

"What would you say to a year or two in a light-house?" asked the woman.

"That would be such a beautiful thing that it could never happen," said Rosey Pink.

The woman smiled and went on ironing. It was a pretty, thin, white dress for Isadora that she was at work on.

"You see," she said, "it is not necessary for a child to wear black at a funeral, and after all it is only a great-grandfather in her case. White will do very well, and be sweet and cool, for, of course, it will be warmer there on the farm than it is on this wide ocean. I shall wear black myself, because I have a cousin who will lend me a dress; but, you see, I did n't know my grandfather very well. I was married very young, and have lived in light-houses ever since,—that is my husband's profession, light-houses. Gracious, won't it seem good to live on the land again, and see flowers growing and hear the birds singing."

"Shall we have birds?" asked the little girl.

"Birds and flowers, and trees growing right up out of the ground, and gardens full of vegetables and fruits, and all of it ours, Isadora."

Isadora kept her eyes fixed on the little white dress, which was now almost ready to be taken from the ironing-table.

"She is not used to dressing up," said her

mother to Rosey Pink. "People don't need much dressing in light-houses."

"I suppose they don't," said Rosey; "and I know you must be very happy even if your grandfather *has* died. But what will you do? Will you come back to the light-house?"

"Only to pack up," said Isadora's mother. "Everything is mine. The whole beautiful farm, and *he* has written his letter of resignation to the Light-house Board already. He began to write it very early, and we will put it in the post-office when we land; so that matter will be settled. And, oh! I am so glad, so glad that we will not have to live here any longer."

So very soon these happy people were ready to go, and they invited the strangers to sit down to luncheon with them; but there were neither fruits nor vegetables nor flowers on the table, and the children began to think that if they lived always in a light-house they would perhaps be just as glad to get away as the woman who had been ironing was.

She said again, while sitting at the table: "Oh! my heart is overwhelmed to think of hearing the birds sing, and of smelling the red roses."

Her husband said, as they started, "I will be sure to be back before sunset;" so the new tenants saw them safely off, and observed that their own little boat was moored securely to the pier, and then they went back to explore and to run up the stone steps and take a kind of awed notice of the immense lantern, and look out of the small windows, beneath which lay the wide, shoreless ocean.

Rosey Pink said after awhile that she could easily see how this place might be, after all, a little lonely; and the boys said that it would be better if they could all get into their boat and sail about awhile, — but that, of course, they could not do, as they had been left in charge. After all it *would* be rather dull if it was not that they had each other, and they wished the other children had come with them.

The light-house man had told them all about the great light, and of how necessary it was that every night that light should shine across the sea, as there were sunken rocks all about. "Indeed;" he had said, "this is the most dangerous place in all the ocean, and the most important light-house, for so many ships pass near; and but for this light they might steer a little out

of their course, and everybody on board would perish."

As it began to be near sundown, the children became anxious for the return of the keeper. They went up to examine the lantern again, and Rosey Pink said: —

"What if the light-house man should be drowned and not come back."

"He won't be drowned," said Jack O'Nory; "but then it *might* happen that he could not get back, and what in the world should we do?"

"Light the lantern," said Rosey Pink.

"Easy saying 'light the lantern.' Do *you* know how to light it?"

"That's not my business," said Rosey Pink, "it's the business of you boys."

Each moment that passed made their anxiety greater, and these three light-house keepers took observations every minute or two to see if it was possible to discover the management of this revolving light, or how to get at it in case its keeper was detained.

Soon the sun had set, and still no sign of a small boat appeared on the darkening sea.

The children determined that (as in a very little while the light must show out from the

high tower, because if it did not all the ships that came along would be wrecked) they must certainly find other means of providing a warning for the sailors on the sea.

Of course, the lamp on the table in the front room must be brought up, but that would be of little use. So every moment the anxiety grew.

Rosey Pink could almost *see* the ships going down with all their passengers and crews, and Jack O'Nory kept staring out in the rapidly growing darkness to discern any ships which might be warned off by shouts and prayers that they would turn another way.

Tom Murphy was poking about in a kind of lumber room, which he found downstairs, and from which he unearthed some pieces of lumber, and, better than all, he thought, a number of old corn-cobs.

"They will make a fine old light," he said to himself.

In the meantime the sea became quite rough, and the waves began to beat against the foundation of the light-house in a very unpleasant way. He opened the kitchen door and looked out upon the troubled water, from which the last vestige of light from the setting sun had

disappeared. In a few minutes the others joined him.

"I say, Jack O'Nory," said Tom, "here's a go."

Rosey Pink agreed with Tom that it was "a go."

Jack O'Nory was very quiet. He seemed to be thinking of the people who "go down to the sea in ships." But after awhile he said that any way they had better take the lamp from the table in the front room and carry it upstairs. So they did this; and when they had set it upon a projection in the tower, and come down again, Tom Murphy showed them all the bits of lumber he had discovered and the old corn-cobs, and the three of them became quite interested, and believed that after all they could succeed in making a light which would be a warning to all the mariners on the sea.

So they took up a large preserving-kettle full of corn-cobs, and they also carried armfuls of old sticks, for they agreed that as there was not a bit of wood in the composition of the light-house, it would make no difference about the smoke,—anything so that there could be light enough for the people on the ships to know that

it was a warning, and that they must keep out of the way of danger.

So they put some of the corn-cobs into the kettle and set fire to them, and they *did* make a smoke, — indeed, so much smoke that the children had to sit on the stairs and keep wiping the tears out of their eyes.

Rosey said she had better go down for more corn-cobs. While she was down there a small steam-yacht landed, and three gentlemen got out of it. They too came round to the kitchen door, and Rosey, who had hoped to see the light-house keeper, stood there with astonished eyes.

"Young lady," said one of the gentlemen, after a little hesitation, "why is there no light in the tower, and what is all this smell of smoke?"

"There is no light in the tower," she answered, "because we do not know anything about the lantern, and we are trying to make a light, but it *will* smoke."

"We are the Light-house Board," said another gentleman, "and we must go up and see about it, but first let us be sure that our boat is fast."

So while they went out to see the captain of

their boat, Rosey Pink ran up to the upper steps where Tom and Jack were sitting, with such tearful, miserable eyes that they could not open them to look at her.

"The Light-house Board is coming up the stairs," said Rosey breathlessly.

"Is it a board that we can set fire to?" asked Tom.

"No, it is three gentlemen."

"Are they mermen?" said Jack.

"I told you that they are the Light-house Board, and they are coming up to see about the lantern."

"Nobody can see the lantern with this smoke," said Tom, who had become too much discouraged on *account* of the smoke to care about the lantern or anything else for the present.

"But they are coming right up," said Rosey, pressing her handkerchief into her eyes; "so let us slip down while they are talking to their captain, and leave it to *them* to light the lantern. I suppose they know how."

The children immediately all stumbled down the stairs and shut themselves into the front room while they tried to get the smoke out of their eyes, and after a while they heard the "Board"

going upstairs and exclaiming and complaining. Almost immediately they came down again, and one of them said to the others: —

"What do you suppose has become of that young girl who was here a few minutes ago? If she went up to the lantern-tower she is probably smothered by this time, and what are we going to do about her?"

Rosey immediately stepped into the kitchen; she said, "We all came down, because the smoke is so strong up there."

"Who is all?"

"Tom Murphy, Jack O'Nory, and I."

"Can you tell us the cause of the smoke?"

"Corn-cobs."

"Corn-cobs?"

"To make a light," said Rosey. "We don't know how to light the lantern."

"Who are you, anyway?"

"Strangers," said Rosey.

The whole Board looked perplexed.

"The light-house keeper has gone away to a funeral," added Rosey, "and we are keeping the light-house for him. Perhaps, — I think, — you had better go up again. You may know how to manage the lantern."

The light-house Board went up and immediately came down, blowing its nose and wiping its eyes and clearing its throat very vigorously.

The boys had now come into the kitchen and had been able to open their eyes and look about, and to be filled with consternation on account of the danger to the ships.

"We have been left in charge," said Jack O'Nory, "and it is a dreadful thing that we should not have known what to do."

"And if we did know what to do," said Tom, "we could not do it with all this smoke."

After awhile the Board too began to look about.

"What is the meaning of it all?" they asked.

Jack O'Nory said that the light-house keeper had gone away to a funeral and had left them in charge, but he had promised to come back before sunset, and so had not shown them what to do about the light.

"He shall be dismissed," said the Board.

The children did not know whether it was more honorable to say that he had taken his resignation away with him or not to say it. They said nothing.

"And now what is to be done," the Board said to each other, "about this infernal smoke?"

"It is nothing but corn-cobs," said Tom, "and it will soon go out. We thought it would make a bright light, but it made a smoke."

"I should think it did," said the Board.

Just then there was a noise outside, and all the other children hurried into the room. Calleen and Mary and Jeanne began to hug the three light-house people, and to exclaim that they thought they had lost them, and were full of trouble about it, while Ernest and Sam Holmes drew up shoulder to shoulder with the boys and told how good Mr. Rattles had been, when they all became anxious, and how he and Remus also had determined that they must come out on the ocean and hunt them up, and how delighted they were when they saw the boat fastened to the pier, for though there was another boat also there, there was no mistaking the one that belonged to the Island Impossible.

Then the children all turned and made curtsies and bows to the Light-house Board, for Rosey had introduced them, saying: "These are the children," and then, "and these gentlemen are the Light-house Board!"

The gentlemen appeared to be very much pleased, but in the meantime Mr. Rattles had passed through the kitchen and up the stairs unobserved by anybody, and immediately such a light shone out over the sea, that everybody in the room cried out, "Oh! oh!" and Mr. Rattles came down with very watery red eyes and the kettle of smoking corn-cobs, which he quietly threw into the sea, and the three children who had been so anxious began to laugh and to cry in such a manner that everybody had to comfort them.

The Light-house Board looked on with observant and interested eyes, while these young inhabitants of this old world comforted and heartened and cherished the three of their number who had suffered such anxiety, and who now, in the reaction from their very real grief, seemed to need the loving sympathy which their comrades were bestowing upon them. And there was a moistness in the older eyes, which was not caused by the smoke from the corn-cobs.

All the children looked upon Mr. Rattles as a hero, whose wisdom and presence of mind had, in a moment, made everybody so happy, and

had probably saved the lives of hundreds of passengers and crews, whose ships were sailing in these dangerous waters.

The Light-house Board shook hands heartily with Mr. Rattles, and said that it never could be thankful enough that the children had come, for if they had not done so, he, Mr. Rattles, would not have felt obliged to come in search of them, and as they, the Board, did not know a thing about managing the lantern, there would have been great danger to the ships, and great blame to the Board.

Mr. Rattles said that he must now take all these youngsters home with him, and the Board promised Tom and Jack and Rosey that *it* would stay until the keeper should come home, which would probably be somewhere in the middle of the night, and in answer to a few words which Rosey had ventured, one of them said with a smile: "Yes, he supposed they would have to be lenient to the keeper, as people did n't often have to go to funerals, especially if they lived all their lives in light-houses."

So away again, sitting in the boat hand in hand, to the beautiful Island Impossible.

## CHAPTER IV

### AT A SOUTH AMERICAN PORT

TOM MURPHY and Jack O'Nory had started off on an expedition in the sail-boat. Mr. Rattles said: —

"And where would you like to go on *this* bout?"

"What do you think about it, Jack?" said Tom.

Jack thought it was a queer business that they had never been to a South American port, — so it was decided to sail to a South American port, and they sailed, — and pretty soon they arrived.

But as their boat entered the harbor, and landed at the wharf, they noticed that there was great confusion, and a crowd of people who, as soon as they saw them, began to call out and to shout at each other in a language that neither one of the boys, nor indeed Mr. Rattles, understood at all.

Pretty soon there was a division among the people, — some running one way, some the other

way, — and after a while the crowd seemed to separate to make way for a man accompanied by two or three others who appeared to be convoying him through the pressing multitude.

"They are coming right towards us, Tom, and everybody is bowing and scraping, and as they appear to be looking at us all the time they are doing it, I am embarrassed, — what about you?"

"I am a little embarrassed myself," said Tom, "but it would never do to let them see that, — I guess we had better begin to bow ourselves."

So these boys began to bow and scrape and put their hands on their hearts, just as this other strange company was doing, and they felt encouraged to go on in this line of action, when they saw that it pleased the whole crowd, which had greatly increased in the vicinity of their boat.

Mr. Rattles, too, became imbued with the spirit of the scene, and he began to bow and make contortions of his face, which were intended to express pleasure, but which certainly might have suggested to the onlookers the belief that he had a very bad pain in his stomach.

When the crowd reached their boat, the man who had been convoyed to the spot said: —

"I am the court interpreter."

"How do you do, Mr. Interpreter?" said Tom and Jack, holding out their hands in a very friendly way.

Then the whole multitude began to make a great noise which sounded like cheering, and everybody took off his hat. Of course Tom and Jack took off their hats and Mr. Rattles took off his.

"There has been a revolution," said the interpreter.

"Is that so," said Tom.

Jack suggested that a revolution was a bad business and a very breaking *up* kind of business.

"No, it is a good business," said the interpreter, — "we have had a king and a queen, — but we have put them down and intend pretty soon to take off their heads. Before we do that we must form a new government, and we intend that it shall be a republic."

The boys said that a republic was the best kind of government.

"And we did not know whom to choose for a President," said the interpreter.

Each time the interpreter spoke it appeared to be by the direction of a proud-looking person who stood close at his side in the midst of all this confusion. Jack said that he thought there must be a great many people from whom to choose a President.

"That is not so," said the interpreter, "we had not much of a choice, for nobody trusts anybody else — but this is the Feast Day of San Antonio, who always finds things which people are looking for, and he has sent you to our shores."

"Were you looking for us?" said Jack O'Nory.

"We were looking for a President." Tom and Jack both said "Oh."

"And it appears that we *were* looking for you," continued the interpreter, "for you have come, and you are to be our President."

"Which one of us?" asked Jack.

The interpreter listened a moment to something the high personage standing beside him was saying, then he answered: —

"You are so young and so small that it will take two of you to make one good President, so you are both to be President."

"Let us understand you, Mr. Interpreter," said Tom Murphy, — "is each one of us to be half of a President?"

"That is just the way of it," answered the interpreter.

"That will suit us very well," said Jack O'Nory.

Almost before he had finished saying these few words, some one had come forward and mounted him very high on his shoulder, while another gold-laced man had done the same by Tom Murphy. These two high officers appeared to be exceedingly high-shouldered, and the boys began their unusual kind of ride up through a very talkative populace from the wharf into the town, while Mr. Rattles was also convoyed with them towards the same place, but he was allowed to walk on his own feet and was evidently more comfortable, and was obviously regarded as being not of the same rank as these two halves of a President of a new republic.

Pretty soon, accompanied by the shouts and cheers of the population, which noises were really needed to keep up the spirit of the boys, they arrived at a palace, and were carried

— still on the shoulders of their magnificently arrayed beasts of burden — right into an immense and imposing hall of State, and up to a dais on which stood two thrones; but the bearers stood still a few moments while some attendants stepped forward and rolled the thrones away from their place, throwing them from the dais, as if they were pieces of furniture which had gone out of fashion, — which, it appeared, they had.

Then some chairs of State were brought in, and pretty soon the boys found themselves seated in them, — very well satisfied to come down from their high and precarious positions.

Then an officer in a fine uniform came forward and stood by the interpreter. He began to speak, and as he spoke the interpreter took every word from his lips and translated it into English, so that this new double-headed President could understand everything that was said. In the meantime, Jack had said, very low: —

"Tom, I wish we were in the boat again," to which Tom answered: —

"I wish we were at this moment landing at our wharf on the shore of The Island Impossible, but I guess we had better pretend

to be pleased, for if we appear not to like their goings on, these funny people may make us prisoners."

The interpreter went on to say that they had come to the conclusion to have a republican form of government, and, having arrived at that conclusion, they had that morning deposed their king, and as they did not know what better to do with him, they had made up their minds to take off his head and also the heads of all his advisers, also of the queen and her maids of honor; and that as soon as the new President had become somewhat accustomed to the chairs of state, — and the people who were thronging into the hall, and thronging out again, had become accustomed to the sight of this new form of government, — they would have the prisoners brought in so that the new President should pass sentence of decapitation.

Jack said to Tom, quite low, "I feel very uncomfortable."

"So do I," said Tom.

Then they brought in the prisoners, but what was the astonishment of this twin President, to see, advancing with the King and Queen — with pale faces and eyes cast down — Rosey Pink

and Mary and Calleen and Jeanne. These girls did not raise their eyes at all to look at the new President; at that moment the interpreter was called away — the President learned afterwards that the interruption was caused by the fact that the crowd who had accompanied Mr. Rattles to the door did not know what to do with him, as they could not understand a word he said, and he evidently could not understand *them;* for that reason the interpreter was called, and as soon as he had gotten out of hearing, Tom said: —

"Rosey Pink, and you other girls, don't look frightened, and don't look at us as if you had *ever* seen us before; Jack and I will look at each other and speak, and you girls must look at each other, — not at us, — and answer." So Tom looked very severely at Jack and said: —

"How in the name of sense did you get here?"

And Rosey Pink, who had given a great start when she heard Tom's voice, stared at the other girls, who had also given starts, and said: —

"And how in the name of sense did *you* get here?"

"That is neither here nor there," said Tom, with his eyes fixed on Jack, — "go on."

"We were out bathing, and Ernest and Sam were with us, swimming about, but we girls took the row-boat that Remus Rattles attends to — "

"I noticed that it was gone," said Jack to Tom.

"And we amused ourselves pushing it before us and swimming — then we thought we would get into it, and we did — and let it float until it had gotten round the point where the waves were very rough. So we began to look for the oars, but there was not an oar to be found. I don't know what Remus could have done with them," continued Rosey, looking strenuously at Mary.

"You'd better not stop for meditation, Rosey," said Calleen; "the interpreter will be back in a minute — "

"We were in very rough waters," continued Rosey, changing the position of her eyes so that Jeanne must become her chief audience, "and we did not feel that it would be quite safe to try to swim to shore, — then we all felt alarmed, though Calleen declared that our only

safety was in forsaking the boat and swimming for the shore, but you know Calleen is very rash."

Jeanne assented, she said, "Calleen *is* very rash."

"Go on," said Jack, speaking, apparently to Tom.

"We did go on," continued Rosey, "till we were quite out at sea and were very much frightened, — we thought of Ernest and Sam swimming about in the harbor free from anxiety about us, for though they had seen us start off, pushing the boat, I suppose they thought we would get in and come back. They had no idea that Remus Rattles was probably lying asleep on the oars, — and then we thought of you two boys who had just pushed off from shore in the boat with Mr. Rattles, with all sails up, and we began to say our prayers — and after we had said our prayers, we saw a ship, and they sent out a little yawl which took us in and brought us to the ship, and we all sailed for this place and landed; but you had better speak now, Mary, for the people will think it queer that I should be telling such a long story."

So Mary said, "And we were brought up

to this palace and were maids of honor to the Queen, so the interpreter told us."

"The Queen *also* told us so," said Calleen, — "she can speak English."

Then Mary continued: —

"And afterwards all this fuss was made, and they deposed the King and the Queen, and although we had not been maids of honor more than an hour or two, they said that we also must have our heads taken off, which is very unpleasant."

Tom looked at Jack intently and said, "Never mind, Mary, and you other girls, for we are the President, and your heads shall not be taken off."

Calleen said to Mary, "I wonder what Ernest and Sam think about it. Won't they be astonished?" Mary's cheeks flushed a beautiful red, and some of the severe-looking men who were standing about, and did not understand a word they said, looked with admiration at her, — many of them seemed to feel sympathy for the maids of honor.

Calleen again informed the President that the Queen spoke English. The Queen nodded her head and smiled a sorrowful little smile.

"That is a good thing," said Jack, with his eyes on Tom's face, "then she will understand what shall be done to save her."

Then the interpreter came back; he said that Mr. Rattles did not desire any position in the civil government, but that he wished to ask the President to make him admiral of the fleet and to let his own boat be the flag-ship. As it appeared that this was the first question to be disposed of, the new President, who was obliged, according to the interpreter, to speak with both his voices at once, announced to the officials, through the interpreter, that Mr. Rattles was to be admiral and was to have full power over the fleet, though he might, if he should choose to do so, live in his own boat and constitute that the flag-ship.

Mr. Rattles at once advanced to the presidential chairs and inclined himself, while Tom Murphy said, in a low voice, — the interpreter being engaged in translating the words of the President (making the appointment of Mr. Rattles) to the other officials: —

"Mr. Rattles, don't start when you see the girls, but be up here in about half an hour so that we can decide what to do."

So when Mr. Rattles did turn and did see the maids of honor, he gave them only a reassuring wink of the eye, though he did not feel very much reassured himself.

But when he walked out as admiral of the fleet, and the whole assembly, to whom the interpreter had announced in a loud voice and in an unknown tongue, so far as the President was concerned, the fact of his present rank, — he was greeted with bows and cheers, and perhaps he thought it was a very fine thing to be admiral of a fleet in a South American port, and perhaps he did n't.

Then the interpreter said it was time the President should choose his advisers, and the President answered with both his voices that he would do so, and that the interpreter must give him a clear idea as to whom should be chosen as advisers, — but that they — the President — would choose for his Secretary of the Navy the man who had just been declared Admiral of the fleet, as it would be well to have one adviser who could speak the same language with the President, and as the advisers would not have to work continuously, but only by fits and starts, the two duties thus devolving upon

Mr. Rattles would not interfere with each other in the least.

After hearing from the interpreter what the choice of the President for his Secretary of the Navy was, the officials declared themselves well pleased, and the interpreter was immediately despatched to intercept the new admiral and bring him back at once.

Jeanne said after the interpreter was out of hearing — looking affectionately at Calleen — "Tom and Jack, that was a good move — to make Mr. Rattles Secretary of the Navy and the admiral, — do you think he can get us away?"

Tom said to Jack, "Maid of honor, you must not question the President."

Then the interpreter returned with Mr. Rattles, and the task of choosing the other advisers began.

It appeared to be the impression in the South American port that in a republic all of the advisers were, as a necessity, to sit on chairs placed on the dais where the President sat, — and that as much of the population of the country as could get into this immense and magnificent hall was necessarily to be present at all

the consultations of the President and his advisers.

Then all the other advisers were soon chosen, and chairs placed for them on the dais, while the poor King and Queen looked on, — and the maids of honor, comforted now, because Jack and Tom and Mr. Rattles were in power, began to look around them, very much interested in this new and surprising situation — stranger than anything they had ever got into before.

The first question to be brought up was about the decapitation of the prisoners, and the maids of honor, as they were foreigners, and girls, were given precedence, so their fate was to be decided first.

The Secretary of State said, through the interpreter, that he did not know whether it was he or the Secretary of War who ought to be most interested in advising as to this question — and the President said he thought it was the duty of the Secretary of State, as these maids of honor were foreigners, and it was his business to attend to everything involved in foreign relations.

Then one of the maids of honor said quite audibly, that she did not believe they had a single

foreign relation in this whole population, unless it might be the Queen, and on account of their being her maids of honor, perhaps they ought to regard her as a kind of stepmother, and indeed, in the short time they had been serving her, they had become much attached to her.

The Queen smiled. Then these four prisoners were brought forward and asked through the interpreter to what nation they belonged.

The girls looked at Tom and Jack, not feeling quite sure whether the boys wished their nationality to be made known.

The President immediately said, "I think these maids of honor look like citizens of the United States, so if you please, Mr. Interpreter, we can understand them without translation, — if you will just translate to the advisers."

"Maids of honor, from what country do you come?"

"From the United States of America."

"In that case," said the President, turning his four eyes towards the other advisers, "there can be no question about these prisoners. They belong to the United States, to which country we ourselves belong, and if any evil should happen to them this port would be in great

danger, for the United States is a very powerful nation."

Some of the advisers looked relieved when this speech of the President's was translated; others looked the reverse, and suggested that the United States had no navy.

The President answered that the United States had a navy — one or two, or perhaps half a dozen ships of war, and about one thousand yachts and tug-boats and canal-boats.

When the advisers heard this, they at once said that the maids of honor ought to be set free.

The maids of honor smiled at all the advisers and made a succession of little curtsies, which seemed to please the officials of this new government.

Then a question arose as to the procedures in the case of the King and the Queen. The President said that of course the Queen must be released with the maids of honor, as she was a woman. There was great opposition to this ruling. The President reminded the advisers that the United States would not tolerate the decapitation of a woman, because there was a kind of a Salic law in the United States

by which no woman was ever permitted to lose her head, — no matter how high her rank — that was a privilege accorded only to men.

"But after all, this port is not the United States," said one of the advisers.

"You are right," said the President, "but as the present government is to be modelled on the plan of the United States government, and as the nations of the world, including 'The Powers,' will hear about this new government, the United States will be sure to remonstrate with all the power of the navy, of which we have been talking, for she could not endure that any government modelled after hers should take off a woman's head."

All the advisers instantly agreed that it would be better to leave the Queen's head on. And at last it was agreed that all the prisoners should be let off except the King, and he certainly must lose his head — for they did not know what else to do with him.

The President agreed to this, saying that otherwise the King might become troublesome, but that no sentence must be passed until the next day, as there was so much other business to be done.

Then the advisers said — always speaking through the interpreter — that they could not wait for that order of decapitation till the next day, as there was no suitable place in which to imprison the King, — all the prisons were in such unsafe condition that a prisoner of State could, at any time, escape.

The President reminded them that there was a fine frigate lying in the harbor which they had noticed as they sailed in — and a ship of war was at any time as good as a fortress for purposes of imprisonment.

Then the advisers declared that this was a good idea — and the order for the removal of the King was given at once. Also the President thought it would be well to let the Queen accompany him, for no disposition could be made of *her* until the next day, and although she was to keep her head, she was of course, for the present, a prisoner of State; and the maids of honor might accompany her to the ship of war in order to bid her good-bye.

All the prisoners who had been released said they also would like to go down to this new prison to bid the King good-bye. Then the King was taken in charge by the admiral of

the fleet, who in his position as Secretary of the Navy, had suggested to the President the advisability of using the ship of war as a prison, and the meeting was broken up.

After the audience dispersed, the President proposed to take a walk to the shore in order to inspect the conditions on the frigate. The whole population was hungry — and although the advisers, who were also hungry, wished to show courtesy to the new head of the government, the President reminded them that they must be hungry and had better go home to dinner, while, so far as the new government was concerned, it had taken dinner on the sail-boat before arriving.

So everything was arranged as they desired; the advisers informing the President that after dinner they would go down to the shore for them, and again they should be carried up on the shoulders of officials.

On arriving at the frigate the President found the poor King, not in chains at all, but very comfortably seated at dinner, with the Queen and the maids of honor and the other released prisoners, while the admiral was very busy having the ship put in order for sailing immedi-

ately. The captain was enthusiastically helping him in this work, for he was a cousin to the Queen, and was warmly attached to the King, and when the Queen said: —

"But to-morrow they will take him up to that hall of State again and pass that dreadful sentence upon him —"

"No, they wont," said the smiling captain, "for the admiral has commanded us to sail away in ten minutes, all hands on board, and we are to land you wherever you choose — for we are your ship of war, and under your command — after the admiral shall have sailed away in his flag-ship; and all the men are delighted to have their King for their ruler again."

"But what about my lovely maids of honor?" said the happy Queen.

"The admiral says they are to go in his flag-ship to their own country, and those two halves of a President are going with them; just so soon as we are at a safe distance from the shore they will all get into the flag-ship."

The new admiral jumped into the flag-ship and pushed off from shore, while the ship of war loosed her anchorage and put on full steam,

and started off just as they saw the population gathering again together to come down to the shore, — and pretty soon there was a great demonstration and a great running about, — but the ship of war was a fast sailer, and the flag-ship could never be beaten by anything on the water, and, besides these, there were no other ships in the harbor.

And after they had gotten well out to sea, the maids of honor said good-bye to the King and to the Queen and to the King's advisers, — and each half of the President said good-bye to the royal party, and to everybody on board, and wished them good luck, and then these United States people dropped into the flag-ship which had come alongside, and the whole ship's company gave three cheers for the two halves of a President, and three cheers for the maids of honor, and three cheers for the flag of the United States of America.

## CHAPTER V

### IN THE CONVALESCENT WARD

THE children were out in the harbor bathing when a boat came along, and the oarsmen drew in their oars while one of them began to talk.

"Are you busy?" said the man.

"Yes," said the children; "don't you see that we are bathing and swimming? we *are* busy."

"Then I suppose there is no use in asking you to help us in our need."

"What is your need?" said Tom Murphy.

"We are nurses in the convalescent wards of the hospital. You know where the hospital is? Right on the shore, on the other side of the city."

"Yes, we know the place," said Calleen; "we have often rowed past there: it is a very pretty place."

"Oh, a charming place," said one of the women in the boat; "you will like it very much."

"But we are not sick," said Rosey Pink; "we are not thinking of going to a hospital."

"We are not sick either," answered the woman, who was young and pretty, "but we live there."

"Oh," said Rosey Pink.

"We are nurses, and we have very pleasant times in the hospital."

Rosey Pink said "Oh," again.

"You see, this is the way of it," said the oarsman who had first spoken: "There is to be an excursion starting this afternoon for the Falls, and we, the nurses in the convalescent wards, want to go on this excursion very much. We should be back in twenty-four hours. The head matron and the head superintendent said that we might all go if we could find some one to fill our places, because, although they could not spare the nurses from the serious wards, any careful people could attend to the convalescent cases."

Jack O'Nory said, "What do you think about it, Ernest?"

Ernest said that any way he could not go, for he had promised to meet Margaret Parker on the bridge that afternoon; they proposed to

gather seaweed on the north shore, and Mary and Sam were going with them.

"That leaves only five of us," said Jack. "How many nurses would you want, Mr. Oarsman?"

"Well, about three boys and three girls."

"We could let you have *two* boys and three girls."

The people in the boat talked together and then they said, "That will do."

"Must we go right away?" asked Jeanne.

"If you please," said the people in the boat.

"Must we wear any special dress?" asked Calleen.

The pretty nurse said that it would be necessary for the girls to wear caps and aprons, but the boys could go in their ordinary clothes.

Calleen said that the girls had no caps.

"We have thought of that," said the pretty nurse, "and have brought our caps to lend you. You can leave them at the hospital when you come away to-morrow."

"Let us try them on," said the girls, as they swam up to the boat.

But the pretty nurse said the caps would be spoiled if they should try them on when their

hair was so wet, and she thought the best way, after all, would be for her to leave them at the hospital, and they could try them on there.

"Shall we be obliged to sit up all night?" asked Tom Murphy.

Calleen said, "Tom, that is a foolish question to ask; of course, if we are to be trained nurses we *will* be obliged to sit up all night."

"Are we trained nurses?" asked Tom.

"Of course we are not going to take charge of the convalescent wards unless we are trained nurses for the time being."

"I see," said Tom. "Well, you people in the boat, you may go away happy, for we will take your places for twenty-four hours. Remus Rattles will row us round to the hospital in our own boat, but you'll have to come home square to the minute, because we shan't stay beyond the time we have promised."

"You children are trumps," said two or three voices at once; "and we will be sure to come home on time."

. . . . . .

So very soon after this the children were rowed round to the hospital, and the matron gave the nurses' caps to the girls. As trained

nurses' caps are very small and simply stand up on the top of the head, they were quite large enough for the girls, who looked into a small glass in the matron's room, and were much pleased with themselves.

The matron said she hoped they would be very careful, for she had a great deal to do in superintending the nurses in the serious wards, and she could not attend to the substitutes at all; but they must all be careful to keep awake, for one could never rely upon the convalescents, — they were so apt to do things which might be very hurtful to them.

The boys who were standing with Rosey Pink and Calleen and Jeanne in the matron's room looked very much concerned, and were wishing in their hearts that they had not been so ready to promise; but the matron took them to the head nurse for the men's convalescent ward, which was immediately next to the women's and children's ward and connected with it by a wide, open door.

"It is a very good thing," said Calleen, "for one of us will be constantly obliged to go in and wake up those boys; as for me, I feel as if I never want to sleep again."

"Calleen is always ready for a lark," said Jeanne.

Calleen said she wondered how Jeanne could think it was a lark to come and sit up all night with poor, sick people, and see their sufferings.

Jeanne said these were not poor sick people, — they were convalescents, and most likely, from what the matron said, they would be fussing about getting up at night and careering around; perhaps they would want to get out of the windows, and it would be a lark any way.

Rosey Pink was looking very serious now, for they had gotten far enough into the room to see the convalescents, and the pretty white beds, — some of them small, for the children, — and through the open door they could see other long rows of beds, and Tom and Jack stepping about on tiptoe and stopping to speak to pale men who were sitting in chairs or walking slowly about the room.

There were no little beds in the men's ward, for all the children were together in one corner of the women's ward.

The girls did not know what to do at first, for nobody seemed to want anything, and they

supposed it would not do for them to sit down like the convalescents — it was their business to be busy.

At last a very cranky old voice said, "Am I not to have any supper at all to-night?"

"Certainly you are," said Jeanne; "I will get your supper immediately."

"Don't mind her, new nurse," said another quiet voice; "she is always asking for dinner or supper or breakfast, and she knows very well she will get it when the proper hour comes, — it is still twenty minutes to supper time, and then the trays are brought to the door, and all you have to do is to bring them in and serve us, for you will notice that there is a small table for every chair."

"We are very much obliged to you for telling us," said Rosey Pink; "you see, we are quite strangers here, and don't exactly know what we ought to do first."

"*Young*," said the cranky woman, in a very discontented tone.

"Cheer up, you old Mrs. Cranky," said Calleen. "Here, I will rub your back for you, and that will make you feel better."

When Jeanne and Rosey Pink saw how

pleased the cranky woman was with Calleen for rubbing her back, they immediately began to rub other convalescents' backs, with so much success that when the supper-trays arrived, the patients did not seem willing that the rubbing should stop; but these new nurses were delighted at the interruption, and immediately began to make themselves useful, running about with the trays and serving everybody at the different little tables. Rosey thought that perhaps the boys had not made as much progress in *their* wards, so she went to the door and said: —

"Tom, have you and Jack served supper to your convalescents?"

"No; where is the supper?" said Tom.

"Most likely, just outside the door; that 's where the dumb-waiter is, with all the trays, on our side."

So Jack and Tom went to the door, and sure enough there were all the trays waiting, so the boys were soon as busy as the girls.

Pretty soon Tom came to the open door and said, "There is a man here who already wants to get out of the window."

"But you must not let him," said Rosey.

"We are not letting him; Jack is tackling him now, but we are afraid to turn our backs for a minute."

"That is a good thing, — he will keep you awake all right; if he were not here, you might drop asleep by and by, and that man will keep you awake like a soldier on duty."

"You don't seem to care much about the trouble we are having."

"No, I don't pity you at all, for we have some queer cases in our room. One of the women says she will not eat her supper any way but lying flat on her back in the middle of the room, and Calleen is feeding her and making much of her, just as if the cross thing were an angel."

When it came time for all these convalescents to be made ready for bed, the girls were at their wits' ends, for everybody was calling to them at once; but the quiet woman said at last: —

"New nurses, just don't listen; all of us are really well enough now to help ourselves to bed, except the lame ones and the children. All these patients are imposing upon you because they know that they can. As for that patient who lay on her back on the floor to take her supper,

— she ought to be ashamed of herself, and she would never have tried that trick on the regular nurses." But the woman on the floor said she was unable to move.

"Then how did you get down there?" said Calleen.

"It was easy enough to get down, but I cannot get up."

"Never mind, after we have the children in bed we will call the nurses from the men's ward to get you up."

The woman on the floor got up in a minute.

The children, — there were five of them, two little boys and three girls, — who appeared to be quite as old as the nurses, were the first ones to be attended to.

After the little boys were safe in bed, and while the trained nurses were undressing the girls, one of them said to Rosey Pink: —

"Can you dance?"

"Yes," said Rosey Pink.

"Jigs?"

"Jigs and other dances."

"Then let us have a jig to-night; with you nurses and the two little boys and us three girls there will be eight, just enough for a good jig."

"But you must not think of such a thing, — you are too sick for jigs."

"We are not sick, we have got over our troubles. I have never been sick, — it was only my shoulder."

"And *my* back," said another girl; while the third one said it was only *her* head.

"But we can't do it," said Rosey.

Calleen interrupted to say, "Why not?"

"Because, even if it should not hurt the children, it would keep all the other convalescents awake, and I suspect that, anyway, it would be against orders."

The girl who wanted to dance said, "But we won't have the jig until the middle of the night, then all the others will be asleep, and we shall dance on tiptoes, and be as merry as grigs and as quiet as butterflies. Do you know what a grig is?"

"Do you?" said Rosey Pink.

"No, but I thought you would know — trained nurses learn everything."

"Well, I am not going to tell you now, anyway; you go to sleep, and ask me again by and by."

"In the middle of the night?"

"No, to-morrow morning."

"But in the middle of the night it will be to-morrow morning, — don't you know that?"

"Good night," said Rosey Pink.

The trained nurses soon had the convalescents tucked away comfortably in bed. They were much disturbed when they opened the beds to notice that all the under sheets were pinned very carefully to the mattress with safety-pins and that they were as smooth as ivory.

They said to each other that they never would be able to make those beds right in the morning, and as they took a pride in their work and would like to have the other trained nurses pleased with the substitutes, it would be very disappointing if they could n't get the beds to look just as they found them; they wished Anno was here.

When the convalescents were all comfortably in bed, Rosey went to the communicating door, which was now only partly open, into the men's room.

"Tom," she said (Tom was sitting perched up on the only window-sill, which was a low one. The other windows were higher up in the wall and had no sills, this one was a beautiful wide window); "What are you doing, Tom?"

"I am sitting here the enduring time, hours and hours, because that man, just as soon as Jack turns his back, comes over here to jump out of this window. I have just had a tussle with him."

"Tom, you know everything, — what is a grig?"

"A grig is sometimes a grasshopper, sometimes a sand-eel, sometimes anything else."

"Are all your men quiet ones except the one who wants to get out of the window?"

"Mostly quiet; but I say, Rosey, they have some funny notions. They asked Jack if I was a priest; and Jack, you know, tells fibs sometimes, — he said I was."

"Then what?"

"Then some of them told him that to-morrow morning they would come and tell me about their sins."

"*Then* what will you do?"

"Oh, I will say that Jack was only joking; for you know, Rosey, *I* can't do anything about their sins."

"Of course not. Do you believe that you will keep awake, you two boys? You had better leave this door wide open, so that if ***we***

hear anybody calling for water, we can come in and wake you up."

"No fear about our going to sleep while that window-man is awake, and he seems so restless that I suppose he will be awake all night. Look here, Rosey."

"What?" said Rosey, who had started for the other ward.

"Don't you suppose it is beautiful on our Island now, with the moonlight coming in at the windows and the air smelling of honeysuckles and our beds so comfortable?"

"To-morrow night we will have all those things, Tom, and this night those trained nurses are having such a holiday."

"That 's so," said Tom.

Jeanne told Rosey when she came back that although the two little boys were fast asleep, the girls were not thinking of sleep — they were thinking of the jig.

"But we did not tell them they could have a jig."

"They say we did not say that they could *not* have it, and so it is the same thing."

"Jeanne, tell them to go to sleep now, and that we will wake them in the middle of the

night; you know we can do that and give them a glass of water or something, so as to keep our promise, but they will be too sleepy then to remember about the jig."

The trained nurses found it a very difficult matter to keep awake, especially as there did not seem to be anything to do,—so they determined to take turns, one watching the clock for half an hour while the others would sleep; but at one o'clock there was a stir in the small beds, so Calleen, whose watch it was, took a glass of water in her hand and met the wide-open eyes of the proposer of the dance.

"Time for the jig," said she, beginning to get out of bed.

"Good gracious, child!" said Calleen, "you will disturb the whole ward."

"Not a bit of it," was the answer; and this girl who had said that it was only her shoulder that was the matter proceeded to wake the two older children, and was going to rouse the little boys when Calleen said they could do just as well without the boys, who were so small that they would be peevish and cry, and spoil everything.

"The other nurses are asleep," said the largest girl, in an astonished voice.

"They are only just resting," answered Calleen.

"You can go and tell them that it is time for the dance; and ask that other nurse whom you call Rosey, what is a grig?"

Calleen awoke Jeanne and Rosey. "Rosey," said she, "what is a grig?"

"It is a grasshopper and a sand-eel and one or two other things."

So Calleen went back to the convalescent girl and said, "It is a grasshopper and a sand-eel and one or two other things."

"That's all right — well, make those other nurses get up and we will begin and be as merry as grigs."

Rosey and Jeanne now came forward; they said: —

"Calleen, it is never going to do to let these children get up in the middle of the night."

"But," said Calleen, "they are already up."

"Yes," said the largest convalescent girl, "and if we don't dance, I shall put my shoulder out of joint again, — I can."

"Oh, for any sake, don't do that," said Rosey.

"Come along, and we will dance the jig with you on our tiptoes, but we must do it without music of any kind, — we must not sing."

So the nurses and the three little convalescents began to dance a jig without a grain of music, and really and truly on their tiptoes; but as they got more and more in the spirit of the jig, there was some pretty sudden shrill laughter, and the steps grew faster, and, say what you will, there *was* a noise. The nurses in the next room were disturbed, and stood at the door looking in; now and then they made remarks: —

"Good for you, convalescent! Well done, Jeanne! Hurrah for you, Rosey Pink!"

When Rosey looked toward the white beds she found every convalescent sitting up looking at the jig.

"Get me my shoes and stockings immediately," said one, "I am going to Ireland."

"Never mind her," said the largest convalescent girl, "she is *always* going to Ireland."

"Go on dancing," said another convalescent. "You look like fairies."

But the girl who could put her shoulder out of joint said, "We are not fairies, we are grigs."

"Go on dancing, grigs," said the woman.

"I want my shoes and stockings put on, I am going to Ireland."

"What shall we do?" said Calleen; "every one of them is awake."

Jeanne said there was nothing to be done except to make these girls go at once to bed; they had had their dance and had been very happy, and no doubt it was all very bad for them, and it had waked up all the grown ones; and it would not be a bit surprising if all the convalescents should die the next day, and if they did, they (the substitutes) would certainly be blamed for it, so the best thing to do would be to make them all go to sleep at once, and try if sleep would not restore them.

"I tell you, I want my shoes and stockings, — I am going to Ireland."

"You had better put them on for her," said the woman in the next bed; "then she 'll be satisfied, and likely drop asleep. She 's been going to Ireland just this way for twenty-five years, they *do* say."

After a while this woman and all the others went to sleep; but in the morning everybody refused to be disturbed, even for breakfast, and when the matron came in she said: —

"You must have been humoring these patients, and you will have a hard time, for they will be querulous all day, and give you enough to do; but I will sit here while you go into my room and take breakfast."

Oh, how long the day seemed till the afternoon, when the real trained nurses came back, and all the substitutes — boys and girls — were in the boat again and on their way to The Island Impossible.

## CHAPTER VI

### JURORS

"NOW in this lovely summer time," said Calleen, "when it is the holidays, I think we ought to go on a longer excursion; we have been making such small journeys lately."

"What do all you others say about it," said Jack O'Nory.

"Let us go," answered the others.

So they started, all the children, and Anno and Roscoe and Remus, in the sail-boat.

"And where are we to go?" asked Mr. Rattles.

"To see the world."

"In that case we must cross the ocean," said Mr. Rattles.

So they crossed the ocean, and Tom Murphy said, that although they had often had great fun in going down-hill on a sled, this was a hundred times better, sliding down these great

waves; and the best part of it was, that there was no walking up-hill about it, and as for the sight of the beautiful ships sailing by so straight and proud, it would never be possible to see that sight on The Island Impossible. And so for his part he was very glad they had started off on a voyage to see the world.

"And they sailed and they sailed," and they came near to the land, and pretty soon they followed a great ship until she came to a place of landing where there seemed to be a city of ships; but Mr. Rattles steered his boat past this white city, right into the loveliest river, which very soon carried these passengers away from all the bustle and commotion, and led them along swiftly till the river began to grow quite narrow, so that they could smell the sweet-scented hay which was drying in heaps on the meadows, while in other fields the women and the children were raking it together and the men were loading the great hay-wagons; and some of these boys and girls thought they would very much like to land and take a hand in this business, but as nobody expressed this wish aloud, there was no move made for landing.

The great barns stood so near the river that

the passengers could look right through their open doors, — doors which framed lovely landscapes on the other side.

Mr. Rattles said, "All these smooth meadows and the hedges between, and the greenness of the grass, and the neatness of everything, — all this means, 'England.'"

"Then we are in England," said the whole boat-load. "Hurrah for merry England, and God save the Queen!" and very soon they landed at the wharf of a pretty town and moored their boat, while they, all of them, set off to explore the town, whose streets seemed to be full of dancing girls and boys, who carried flowers in their hands, at their waists, on their hats, on their shoulders, — everywhere where flowers could possibly find a place. They smiled at the strange children, who asked them, "And where are you going, so blythe and gay?"

"We are going to a Sunday-school picnic, and will you all come with us?"

The children hesitated, but Mr. Rattles said:

"If you go to the Sunday-school picnic, you will not have much time left for seeing the rest of the world."

So they shook their heads at the happy Sun-

day-school picnickers, and passed along up the shady street.

They saw two policemen, who regarded them intently and with apparent interest. These policemen appeared to be looking for something, but whether it was for a thief or for something smaller they could not tell; however, after passing them the policemen turned and passed them again, and the children heard one say to the other: —

"Just twelve of them, exactly the right number."

"Do you suppose they think any one of us is a thief?" said Sam Holmes.

Calleen said, "No; the men had said, 'Just twelve of them, exactly the right number,' and it was not likely they were looking for twelve thieves."

"They are very uncomfortable-looking men," said Mary. "They look warm, and that may make them so ill-natured as to imagine that everybody is a thief."

The policemen walked on and came to a standstill at the head of the street, so that these strangers, who were exploring the shady streets, soon came up to them.

"Have you formed any opinion in the case of Silas against Silas?" asked one of them.

As he looked at the whole crowd when he spoke, the whole crowd answered that they did n't know anything about either one of the Silases.

"Then you have n't read the papers," said the other policeman.

And the whole crowd answered again: —

"No, we have n't read the papers."

"If you are examining the town, we want to show you the very handsomest building in the place, the Court House, so will you come with us?"

The children assented; but as they walked along, Rosey Pink said: —

"It looks as if we had all been arrested."

When they came to the Court House, they were carried by their guides right up to a chair where a judge was sitting, and as they passed up they noticed that the Court House was quite full, that there were lawyers standing about, and that they, the children, attracted a good deal of attention on their way to the Judge's seat.

"Your Honor," said one of the policemen:

"here are twelve jurymen, good men and true, who do not know anything about either one of the Silases, who have n't read the papers, and who are at your service; that five of them are girls will not, your Honor, make any difference, as the movement about women's rights has become very strong in the country, and they will be accepted just as soon as your Honor shall order them to be sworn in."

"Swear them in," ordered the Judge.

Then somebody with a big staff in his hand came forward and began to speak.

First he asked if they had formed any opinion in the case of Silas against Silas, and Tom Murphy said: —

"We have already said that we don't know either of the Silases, and now —" but the Judge interrupted and said again, "Swear them in;" so, somehow or another, they were sworn in, and were then conducted to a kind of fenced-off place, which the man with the big staff called a jury-box, and were all seated, by that same man, — the boys in the front row, the girls in the second row, and Mr. Rattles and Roscoe, who looked rather sheepish, behind the others.

Rosey Pink leaned forward, and asked Jack O'Nory: —

"Is this a lark?"

"A pretty good-sized lark," said Jack. "How are we going to get away?"

"We are not going to get away at all," said Tom Murphy.

Calleen said it was just as inconvenient as if they had been thieves; "and what *are* we, any way?" she continued.

"Don't you see," said Jack, "that we are jurors."

Then the Judge pounded something on the table before him, and all the buzz which was going on stopped in a minute.

The children understood then, when everything was so quiet that you could almost hear a spider spinning his web between the ceiling and the floor, that they could not speak to each other any more.

Then one of the lawyers stood up and said: —

"Your Honor, my client, Peter Silas, owns twenty acres of land, and his cousin, Solomon Silas, wishes to take it away from him."

"What a shameful thing to do," said Jeanne, quite low, to Rosey Pink.

In a minute another lawyer, a quick-speaking man, jumped up and said : —

" Your Honor, my client, Solomon Silas, has lived on that land for twenty years, and has dug a well on it, and done a great many things to improve it, and now Peter Silas wants to turn him out of the place where he was so comfortable with his wife and children."

" What a shameful thing to do," said Rosey Pink, leaning over and speaking to Tom Murphy.

Then the first lawyer rose and said that his client, Peter Silas, was quite willing to let his cousin, Solomon Silas, remove his house and all his improvements off the land, except, indeed, the improvement of the well, which he had dug, which could not very well be moved.

" That seems fair enough," said Ernest, in a distinct voice.

The Judge said, quite sternly : —

" The jury will please refrain from expressing an opinion, and, indeed, it has no right even to form an opinion at this stage of the proceedings, — it lays itself open to the danger of being challenged."

" Challenged," said Jeanne in a whisper, her face pale with fright.

"Don't be so frightened, Jeanne," said Mary, in the same low whisper. "He does n't mean that we would have to fight a duel."

"Then what does he mean?" said Jeanne.

"No matter; don't talk; if we do, we will get into trouble."

The lawyer who had just been speaking continued, saying that his client, Peter Silas, did not even ask payment of rent for all these years that Solomon Silas had lived on his land, but that he wanted the land himself now. He was going to marry a widow with eleven small children, many of them twins, and he wished to have as much room about him as he possibly could have, and he was obliged to build a new house at once, if his cousin would only be so obliging as to move off the land. It was very inconvenient, as he could not marry until he had possession of the land, and meantime all these young children must remain without his protection.

"I think Solomon ought to move off at once," whispered Tom to Jack.

Jack made eyes of assent to Tom's opinion. Then the other lawyer rose and said that Solomon Silas had already twelve children of his

own; that it would cost him a great deal of money to move his house and all his other improvements, and in the meantime, what was *he* going to do with *his* children?

Sam said to Ernest, under his breath, that it would be a very cruel thing in Peter Silas to expect Solomon Silas to move.

Then there was a great deal more talk, first from one lawyer then from the other; and the Judge now and again opened different big books, which lay on a desk before him, and read long lectures out of these books in a very drony kind of a way, so that the jurors thought the Judge was pretty nearly asleep, and they were not quite sure of themselves; they realized that *they* were pretty nearly asleep, and that if anybody should call upon them to read out of those big books, they too would be very likely to read in a drony kind of way.

They stopped paying attention to anything that either the lawyers or the Judge was saying, for it did seem so silly to be going over the same thing all the time, backward and forward, and nothing coming of it, and no one being satisfied, and the lawyers were getting very red in the face, and were looking as if they would

like to kill each other; and the spider, who had gone down from the ceiling to the floor, was now going up again, and *that* was interesting.

Then their attention was again attracted, for the lawyers stopped talking and everybody sat down, except those who did not have any seats; and the Judge began to speak, and turned himself towards the penned-in place in which they were sitting, and said: —

"Gentlemen of the Jury," and a great deal more besides.

He kept constantly saying, "And you are to take care;" but of what, and about what, the children could not for the life of them find out. And after the Judge stopped speaking, the man with the staff came and told them to follow him. He took them into a room, which was empty except that it had twelve chairs in it, and the man with the staff said: —

"Here is a bell on the floor, and when you have come to a decision, ring that bell and I will come and take you into court again."

Then he went away.

The children had no desire to be taken into court again, neither had Anno or Mr. Rattles or Roscoe, so they thought it was most likely

they would not ring the bell, but would quietly go out of the door and walk down the pretty street till they should come to the wharf and get into their boat.

Calleen told Mr. Rattles it was a pity he did not let them go with the picnickers, for certainly they had lost about as much time here as they would have done in the other way, and the other way would have been far pleasanter. Then they went to the windows and looked out, and saw the pretty river, and became quite anxious to hurry down and sail away again to see the rest of the world, and hoped they were going to have no more hindrances such as this had been. But when Tom Murphy tried to open the door he found that it was locked. What was to be done now? The children were very much disconcerted. The whole company sat down on the twelve chairs to meditate, but nobody seemed to have any idea what was to be done next. At last, Rosey Pink suggested that there was the bell, of which the man with the staff had spoken, and he said when they had come to a decision to ring the bell, which, of course, must have meant, when they had decided to go, they were to ring the bell. He

certainly did not think they were going to decide to go back into the court-room, even if he *had* said he would take them back there; and perhaps he had thought they were warm and would like to get cool in this room, which had no furniture anywhere about it to annoy them, and most likely he had locked the door to prevent any chance of their being annoyed.

Mr. Rattles said that, not being a landsman, of course, he did not know much about things, but he believed the man with the staff expected them to go back to the court-room again.

"Any way, let's ring the bell," said Jack O'Nory; and so they rang it, and were all standing in a row near the door when the man with the staff opened it.

"You have decided pretty quick," said the man. "Who do you think had the right of it?"

"What did you say?" said Ernest.

"Who do you think had the right of it,—Peter Silas or Solomon Silas?"

Tom Murphy looked round at the others.

"Oh!" he said. Then Calleen stepped forward.

"I don't think we have quite decided yet,"

she said. "But will you please bring us a pitcher of water and some tumblers?"

"Certainly," said the man with the staff. And then when he was gone, locking the door behind him, Calleen said: —

"Children, he means us to decide which of those people should have the land, and then we would have to go in and tell the Judge about it. I remember now, a long time ago, uncle had to be a juror, and I heard him talking to the dear auntie about it. So when the water comes, let's tell him we have not decided, and then he will go away and we can talk to each other and see what we can do."

So they said they had not yet decided, and the door was again locked.

Mary said, "There is no use talking about deciding. I can't do it, for one. I am so sorry for both those people, — for Peter and for Solomon, and for all those unhappy children, and those mothers who must be very much perplexed, and it would be impossible for me to decide."

All the others said it would be impossible for them to decide, and Mr. Rattles said he was dashed if he could decide. Anno began to cry,

because she did not know how they could get out of that place. Then they went to the windows and looked out, and said that no windows were at the back of the Court House, and if they were only on the ground they could run down to the wharf quite easily with no fear of being seen, but, alas! these windows were two stories high, and it would not do to risk breaking any of their bones here and being taken back to the court-room for the lawyers to make a speech about them.

Mr. Rattles seemed to be very intent and abstracted while he was looking out of the window. He was evidently measuring something with his eye, and weighing something in his mind.

"You see," said Ernest, "you girls are just as good climbers as we are, but this two-story business is a little high for any of us. Of course, if we had a rope."

"Well," said Mr. Rattles slowly, "that is all that is necessary — a rope — I have been looking out of that window pretty sharp, and I don't see anything to hinder in the way of getting down to the wharf. There are no windows in the room beneath, so they could not see us, and

I know all you young ones are like cats about climbing, and as I always carry a rope —"

"Oh! do you, do you?" said everybody.

"In case of accidents," continued Mr. Rattles.

"And this is an accident, this is an accident," said everybody.

"We might as well," continued Mr. Rattles, "start."

"But where is the rope?" said Rosey Pink.

"Coiled round my waist;" so they uncoiled the rope, yards and yards and yards of it, and really Mr. Rattles looked more like himself than he had looked when they started on their journey.

"I thought you had grown fat very suddenly," said Jeanne; "but I didn't like to notice it."

Then it was a question to what the rope should be fastened. It would not do to tie it to a chair, for the chair would certainly, in that case, go out of the window with them; but on exploring, they found a very convenient hook driven into the wall of the house just outside of the window, and it did not take any time to fasten the rope very securely, and then these climbers very soon let themselves down hand over hand, and all alighted on the ground safe and sound. Of course, the rope had to be left

behind, but then Mr. Rattles could easily get another one. There was no time lost in running through the pretty streets and getting down to the river again, where they pushed off from shore joyful in their escape.

## CHAPTER VII

### ON THE GREAT DESERT

SO they sailed out into the wide ocean again, far away, and far away.

They passed many places on the shores of Palestine, whose names they had always known, and now and again one would say to Mr. Rattles: —

"Why should we not land at this beautiful place of which we have read so much?"

And another would say: —

"Oh, let us land at the old-fashioned Joppa, — I know they call it Jaffa now, but it is Joppa in the Bible; so let us land and 'go up to Jerusalem.'"

But Mr. Rattles said, "If we land anywhere now, we certainly cannot see The Great Desert, or ride on the camels, for pretty soon we must be at home again."

So the children were quiet, and decided that no stop must be made until they should sail up the river Nile, and leave their boat, and

travel overland to the place where they must take their camels to go across The Great Desert.

They were all glad to see Cairo, and to stop for a minute and walk about. They said Cairo must really be the capital of the world, because people from all parts of the world were walking through its sunny streets; but Mr. Rattles hurried them so much that their eyes were always turning backward, looking at the glittering cities and the green shores which they had reluctantly passed. Mary said the longer the time before they reached the camels, the better for her, for she was sure that she would be sea-sick on the back of a camel, and certainly she thought it a hazardous business, and she was very much in dread of that experience.

At last they reached the starting-place, and Jack O'Nory said that so far they had seemed to be making a journey in a dream.

The camels were waiting for them, and a dragoman, and a cook, and two or three other men, and there was a crowd of people waiting for more camels; but the Director of Affairs said that this party of children was to have the first choice, and as there were still three vacant

camels left, with this dragoman, the children should choose which three of the waiting travellers they would take for companions.

Tom Murphy said, "Jack, there is a bishop standing over there, and he has a young lady with him, and a young man, — they would just suit for the three camels."

"So they would, and I rather like the looks of the bishop; the young lady is as pretty as a violet, and the young man looks as if he might be good fun."

So it was decided that the bishop and *his* party should join this very young party.

But oh, what a business it was to mount, — to see these great, lazy-looking animals lie down, to get on to them, and be suddenly jerked up somewhere into the air, and to know that, after one was safely on and safely jerked up, it would require quite a long step-ladder to take one down again, should he wish to dismount in a hurry. As for Mary, she would certainly have come down, if she could have done so without breaking her neck.

After the camels started the children were full of glee.

"It seems as if we were up in the rigging of

a ship and were sailing through the bluest, softest air," said Jeanne, and the bishop's daughter, who was riding near her, said Jeanne was right, — that was just the way she felt also.

The dragoman, who spoke English perfectly, was greatly pleased with these tourists; and the bishop kept smiling, partly with pleasure because he had so soon been furnished with his camels and his guides, and partly because he and his companions were delighted with the society of their fellow-travellers.

The bishop's daughter was not yet twenty years old, and she was so charming that both the boys and the girls were always trying for a chance to ride beside her. She told the girls that pretty soon she was to be married; that she and her father lived in the United States, and that they had met, in Jerusalem, a gentleman who was also from the United States; and in answer to a question from Calleen, she said that somehow or other this gentleman and she had become engaged and were to be married.

"Is the gentleman you are to marry riding on that camel over by the bishop?" asked Rosey Pink.

"Yes; but how did you know?"

"I don't know how I know; but I *do* know."

"We all know," said Calleen; "the boys as well."

"Oh," said the charming girl, whose name was Antoinette; and then she said, after a little pause, "You are good guessers."

"Why don't you be married here on the desert?" said Rosey Pink, — "your father is a bishop."

Antoinette laughed and blushed and looked so pretty that the traveller who was riding by the bishop, having turned and caught sight of the smiling face, immediately drew up his camel beside her.

"Why are you smiling?" he asked.

Rosey Pink said, "We are all smiling because we think it would be a lovely thing if you and Antoinette should be married here on the desert. What is your name?"

"My name is John."

"Would n't you think that would be pleasant, John?"

"Oh, the most lovely thing, and why not?" said John, turning to the pretty girl.

But Antoinette laughed again, and hurried

her camel on to her father's side, John following close behind.

Jeanne confided to Calleen that it was very interesting. Meantime, the boys had been listening to wonderful tales which the bishop was telling about the Moslems and the Arabians and the inhabitants of Palestine whose shores they had passed; and Mr. Rattles had settled himself by the dragoman, and very soon acquired so much information that he could make himself quite useful, assuring the children of their safety when the camels prepared to lie suddenly down again at evening time; helping to build the tents for the night, and watching the cook as he made preparations for the supper, — indeed, the cook, with his little travelling-stove to help him, made such beautiful pancakes that everybody praised them heartily, and Anno became quite jealous, for she was famous at home for making pancakes.

To sleep out under the stars was a wonderful delight, for really the tents were hardly meant to cover them.

Mary asked the dragoman if there was ever danger in crossing the desert.

"Danger from what?" said he.

"Well, from robbers — and things."

He answered quite slowly, "There is sometimes danger, for you see, the desert is like the ocean, and there is no one upon whom we could call for protection; generally on our trips, we have a good many armed, good-sized men amongst the travellers; but you children could not make much of a fight." He looked at her with a very dubious expression in his eyes, which expression and the slowness of his speech added very much to Mary's alarm, which had been increasing momentarily from the time he began to speak.

"Who would be the robbers?" she asked.

"Bedouins."

"The people who ride the beautiful Arabian horses?" asked Mary.

"The same," answered the dragoman.

Mary did not feel that she could be very much alarmed about the Bedouins; she had always thought of them with admiration, their chief characteristic, so far as she had formed an opinion, being that they loved their mothers and adored their horses — and rode like the wind.

"And when shall we come to an oasis?" asked Calleen.

"Pretty soon after we start out on our morning journey. Your camel will tell you (for the camel can smell the water a mile away), and he will begin to sniff and shake his head about in such a way, that if you should not know the cause for it, you would think something very serious was the matter with him."

So Calleen immediately went to all the other travellers and told them what their camels would be apt to do to-morrow.

And sure enough, they did it. But the oasis was very beautiful after travelling on the sandy plain, and Ernest said he would like to live here forever where the fresh water and the green grass were so delightful.

"Huh," said Sam, "you would pretty soon get tired of this business, and any way, you know that there are crowds of oases in the United States."

The girls took the opportunity afforded by the oasis to get into very close conversation with the charming Antoinette and to examine the beautiful whiteness of the back of her neck and the smallness of her ears, and they made her let her amber hair fall down about her waist, because they said that Anno, who could be an

excellent ladies' maid, could put it up for her so that it would look better than before she had let it down, and indeed, Anno was pleased to pass her fingers through the bright scented hair and to arrange it again on Antoinette's pretty head.

While her hair was being arranged she was telling the children about Jerusalem, but all the time she was telling, it seemed to be mostly about John, — "There we met John," and "When we turned the corner John was coming down the street," and "Whom should we meet when we came down the street, but John, talking to an Arab," — so the listeners did not acquire a great deal of information about Jerusalem proper, — only about this temporary inhabitant of that city.

"But I am in a hurry to go on," said Rosey Pink, "and to see a troop of Bedouins."

"Better not wish for that," said the dragoman, "they are sometimes dangerous." And Mary, who thought that now she knew everything about the Bedouins, said: —

"They are dangerous."

"Dangerous? Oh, how delightful," said all the boys. But the traveller whose name was

John turned very pale and looked at Antoinette with concern.

After that, he seemed to be having a very earnest conversation with the bishop, who said, "Oh, nonsense," and he kept on having a conversation, and the bishop kept on saying "Oh, nonsense," while Antoinette, who was sitting huddled up among the children, looked with some curiosity at her father and at John.

"I know what they are talking about," said Rosey Pink.

"No, — do you?" asked Antoinette.

"About the 'Bedouins' and the dangerousness of them."

"Yes," added Calleen, "and I heard the bishop say quite distinctly — 'Married, oh, nonsense.'"

Then Antoinette's face became very red. "Calleen," she said, "you heard wrong about the 'married,' but I know father said 'Oh, nonsense.'"

"He said the other too," insisted Calleen.

Everybody was busy looking for troops of Bedouins, and it seemed that John had begun to talk to Antoinette upon the subject which had interested him when he was talking to the

bishop, for she too said, "Oh, nonsense," and then, "What nonsense," and her eyes were shining like stars while her cheeks were rosy red.

"All you children," said John, — "don't you think it would be a lovely thing to have a wedding when we get to the next oasis? — then the girls could be bridesmaids, and the boys could be 'best men' and ushers and everything else, and the cook could make a fine wedding feast for us, — for, do you know, he says he can make ice-cream out here in the desert just as well as if he was in a house in a city."

John had come away from Antoinette when he made this proposition and was standing by himself. The girls and the boys took hands and made a ring and danced around him, crying out — "It will be beautiful, — it will be delightful, — it will be splendid, — Oh, let us have the wedding!"

They made such a noise that the bishop came to see what was the matter, and Antoinette seemed to be half laughing, half crying.

John said, "You see, Bishop, that the other tourists who did us the honor to choose us for their comrades will be very much disappointed

if they cannot have this wedding, and where in civilization could we find such bridesmaids and such best men; and oh, Bishop, what if the Bedouins should attack us, and I should not have the right to defend her?"

"You certainly intend that *I* shall be killed by the Bedouins," said the bishop, laughing heartily.

And when John and the children heard the bishop's cheery laughter, they felt encouraged, and this time they surrounded the bishop, having dragged Antoinette over to make part of the ring; and they danced round the bishop and said, "You are our prisoner, and we cannot, cannot let you out until you surrender,—and promise, and we will sing, 'Open the ring and take her in, and kiss her when you get her in'—and you may take her, and may kiss her, if you will only promise."

And the bishop kept saying "Oh, nonsense," and "What nonsense," and Antoinette did not say anything, but John separated himself from the others and stood by the bishop.

"Believe me, it would be better so," he said, "and if *I* were to be killed by the Bedouins, I would like to feel that she would be my widow

and would have a right to mourn for me after you and she should go back to the United States."

"What nonsense," said the bishop, looking into John's smiling face; "you seem to be pleased with the idea of Antoinette's being a widow." At last the bishop said: "Well, if I do consent, this will be the queerest wedding I have ever seen, and the queerest company and the queerest surroundings, — and yet I don't know but what it would be just as solemn, perhaps more solemn, and certainly there will be all the elements of youth and sincerity (added to complete lawlessness). What do you say, Antoinette?"

Antoinette said nothing, but the children all answered for her: —

"She will be delighted, — she will think it the greatest fun that ever was," and they unloosed her hands from theirs and gave her a gentle push, singing out, "Open the ring and let her in, and you may both kiss her when you get her in."

The dragoman was greatly pleased with the idea of the wedding, and Anno said how good it would be if everybody could be married on the

desert, for then there would be no trouble about dressing up, and no worry and fuss about receptions and cards and presents and all that. Then Roscoe said that if Anno thought that way, it would be a very good thing if they could have *their* wedding now, but Anno said that was a different matter. She *would* like a little more fuss when she was married, especially about the veil, and the presents — and the cook said there could be a wedding breakfast which would be just like any other breakfast.

"Except that there shall be ice-cream," said the children; and the cook promised that there should be ice-cream.

Then it was time for the camels to be brought up, and to lie down again and jerk the travellers up into the air and then settle down into a gait which is used for a ship at sea.

And when they came to the next oasis everybody was busy with preparations for the wedding, but in the midst of their preparations there was a great cloud of sand seen in the distance, which cloud grew nearer and nearer till it was so close that the travellers could see the beautiful horses and the wild-looking men

who dashed past on the other side of their green stopping place.

The dragoman said "Bedouins," — and the bishop said, "Now that the enemy has passed, it will not be necessary to keep my promise."

But both John and the children interrupted to say very solemnly, "There will be other enemies."

So the promise was kept, and the beautiful wedding service was read out of the Prayer-Book which the bishop carried in his pocket, while the four girls and Anno stood behind Antoinette, and the four boys stood behind John, — and Mr. Rattles and Remus and Roscoe, with the dragoman and the cook and the guides, formed the congregation, and the great desert, with the sky touching it on every side, stretched away in the distance — like a picture in a dream.

The children had done a great deal of dressing up with the green things that they could find on the oasis, so that the bishop said Antoinette looked very much like an artichoke, while the bridesmaids made him think of green radish-tops; but it was a charming wedding — everybody was smiling, and there was a

splendid wedding feast, with pancakes — and ice-cream.

The best men acted as ushers and waited on everybody, while the bridesmaids sat on the bank beside Antoinette, and did n't do a single thing in the way of being useful.

But suddenly, when everybody was feeling very comfortable, and John was sitting holding Antoinette's hand, another great cloud of dust and sand rose on the desert, travelling very quickly towards the oasis; and the children said, "Now we shall see some more flying horses," — but the dragoman stood up and looked towards the advancing cloud, shading his eyes with his hand and looking very serious. Then he said something in an unknown language to one of the guides, and going over to the pack-camel, he took out a small parcel and put it in his bosom.

He came over to the bishop then, and said to him quite low, "If these people should mean mischief, there is nothing that we can do, for though the guides and I are armed, and I believe also you and the young man, the others of our party are without weapons or the habit of using them, — and from the size of the sand

cloud they are bringing with them, it is a much more numerous party than the one which lately passed."

"What would they do to us?" asked the bishop.

"Take possession of us, and decide upon terms for a ransom; that is, if we do not attempt resistance, — and you had better tell the rest of the party what we have been talking about before they come up."

The rest of the party did not appear alarmed when they heard about being taken prisoners, and about the ransom, — the boys were rather excited with the thought of seeing these beautiful horses, with a chance to examine them and to touch them, and the girls shared in this excitement.

Pretty soon the Bedouins came up, and stopped at the oasis. They all dropped from their horses in an instant, and the leader stepped up to the dragoman, who had come forward; then there was a long conference, all the other Bedouins standing immovable and mute.

"What does he say?" asked the bishop, as the dragoman turned towards him.

"He says that I can send a guide back on one of the camels, to the camel-master, desiring ransom-money for the camels and the attendants, that they will make terms with you for ransom for yourself and your daughter and her husband, and that they will keep the children."

"That they shall never do," said the bishop.

"And oh, father, cannot you ransom the children also?" said Antoinette.

"I will do anything to save the children," said the bishop.

The children heard what was going on and the girls were very pale.

"Never mind," said Antoinette, "you *shall* be ransomed." But the Bedouins said to the dragoman that they preferred to keep the children.

Tom went up to the bishop and spoke to him. Of course the Bedouins did not understand anything that was said in English, — all their talking had to be done through the dragoman.

"Bishop," said Tom, "don't say anything to them about us just now; let us all stay quiet till the night comes down to the earth, and then decide what is to be done. You see Jack O'Nory and I know a good deal about Arabian

horses, and we know that if you just whisper in their ears they will do anything you want them to."

"But these are Arabian horses, Tom, and they would not understand our language."

"They understand every language," answered Tom, "and we have been counting the horses, and there is just the same number as the number of our camels, so there would be a horse for every one of us; let us 'lay low,' Bishop, and 'watch out,' and not talk about the ransom or anything else just now."

So the bishop "lay low" and "watched out," and Tom and Jack with Ernest and Sam walked out amongst the horses and watched them drinking the clear spring water and patted their necks; and the Bedouins liked the boys and were still more determined to keep the children.

Then the boys helped the Bedouins to clean down the shining coats of their horses, and, as sand is not a sticky thing, they soon had them clean and bright, and polished so that their bodies shone like bronze and like silver, and the Bedouins showed the boys many little tricks which the horses could perform. After a little

while Jack O'Nory made signs to one of the Bedouins that he would like to see how they made their horses go so fast, — what they said to them; so the Bedouin leaned down and twisted the ear of his horse, and while he did so, he said something and darted on to the back of the horse which had already started and was going like the wind.

When he turned and came back Tom Murphy made signs, asking what words he had said, and the Bedouin said, "Kismunalalu."

Jack O'Nory wrote down on a piece of paper (which he had in his pocket along with a hundred other things), "Kismunalalu," and then he went to every one of the tourists, and to the dragoman and to the cook, and to all the guides except the one who had gone back to see about the ransom-money for the camels, and taught every one to say in a very low voice the word "Kismunalalu," and he told everybody about the little twist which must be given to the left ear of the horse.

"Because," he said, "we may, perhaps, have a chance to get away, every one of us, and if we do, it must be on their horses; and, dear Bishop, if we *can*, there will be nothing to be said about

ransoms ; and oh, how we love you, because you said, ' I will do anything to save the children.' "

So the night fell, and the Bedouins let their horses wander about, for they knew they would not leave the green oasis, and there was certainly nobody near who could steal horses that never went anywhere unless a magic word was whispered into their twisted ears ; even the one who had told Tom Murphy about the magic word felt no disturbance in his mind as to that matter, for what harm could be done by having satisfied the curiosity of a young and thoughtless boy ; and these travellers were quite defenceless, for even if the dragoman should be so foolish as to make an attempt to escape on the camels, the getting ready to escape with those noisy beasts would make confusion enough to waken the inhabitants of the tombs of the prophets.

So these robbers, who had travelled far and ridden fast, and who were overcome with fatigue. lay down on one side of the high ground, and the tourists all seated themselves on the other side. These two parties were entirely out of sight of each other, as there was quite a hill between them, and the horses were eating the

grass very near the place where the tourists were sitting, talking in a low voice.

"The first thing to be done," said Rosey Pink, "is for you boys to steal away and find out if the Bedouins are asleep."

"Too soon yet," said Jack O'Nory; "we must give them time, and while we are giving them time, we must, each one of us, choose which horse we will take, for we will have to march up to the horses, and each one must twist the ear of the one he has chosen, and whisper the right word while we are getting on. That is the way they are educated — they start before the rider gets on. I know that we boys can do that — and all the girls — but I don't know about Antoinette, and the bishop, and Mr. Rattles. You see John cannot wait to put Antoinette on, because the horse will start at once and might wake the Bedouins before we could all get away, — everybody must say the word into the ear of his horse at the same time."

Antoinette said that she had been a rider all her life, and could get on to a horse while he was running very fast, and Mr. Rattles said, all that was necessary was to give him the information which had already been given. He said that

people who "go down to the sea in ships" — in which way he had spent his youth — were always pretty ready to jump quick when there was danger, and as there seemed to be danger to-night, he was ready.

Everybody else knew all about jumping in a hurry — even the bishop, — so the only thing that remained to be done was for each traveller to make sure of the horse at whose side he must stand, when somebody should make a sign and the word should be whispered into the twisted ears of the horses.

Antoinette had the first choice, and she chose a white one with a silver mane, while Mary chose a white one with a dark mane. All the girls then had their choice, and there were many gray horses, but each one had some distinguishing mark; so the girls said, "We will all take the gray ones."

The bishop chose a fine bronze fellow, and each person had very soon made his selection and kept an eye on that particular animal, just as if it had been bought and had to be watched because there were thieves about who might steal it.

Jeanne said, "Is n't it fortunate that we got

through with the wedding and the feast before they came?" And John moved close up to Antoinette again — and took her hand again — which he had been doing pretty steadily ever since the marriage ceremony had taken place.

It was a pretty anxious time, watching those horses, for they were perpetually changing places, and the gray ones were forever getting mixed up together, so the girls were kept occupied all the time, sorting them out, with their eyes. As for the others, they were not so hard to keep track of; and the bishop's choice, the bronze fellow, seemed inclined to join the party for the night, for he would come up nibbling the grass quite close to their feet.

At last, Mary said, "The time is passing, boys — don't you think you had better see if the Bedouins are asleep?"

"Yes," said the boys; "but first, do you all remember the word?"

"Kismunalalu," everybody said in a whisper, "and the twist."

The boys asked the dragoman to go with them, and be near enough to translate anything a Bedouin might say, if he happened to be awake and to accost these scouts.

Then they stole away, each one singly — to the east, to the west — that they might be sure that on either side there was no one awake.

As Jack was passing round on the east side, one man who was lying on the ground suddenly sat up. He said something, looking at Jack intently. Jack made signs to him that it was such a fine night, he had been tempted to walk about in the coolness.

The man lay down again and dropped asleep instantly.

The other boys had found all the others sleeping pretty soundly. As they walked back, Jack said to the dragoman: —

"What did he say when he woke up?"

"He said, 'Who called me?' and after you had made signs to him he said, 'I thought my mother was calling me,' then he immediately went to sleep again."

Oh, what a moment of anxiety followed when every man and woman and girl and boy had to take a place immediately at the shoulder of the horse which each one had chosen.

The bishop said a little prayer that God would give them courage, would protect them and guide them. Then he said: "If we feel

anxious about each other, we will be sure to fail. Let us each trust that the others will, at the right moment, do exactly the right thing, and after we have started we can count and see if we are all together, — then, if any one is missing, we will come back again, and think only of the ransoms."

Then they went out with silent feet, and each one placed himself or herself by the selected horse. The horses did not seem to mind this companionship at all — just went on eating as if it was none of their business who should be wandering over the grass with them.

It had been arranged that so soon as everybody had taken the right place Antoinette should wave her white handkerchief, and when they saw the flutter of that white flag, everybody whispered the word into the twisted ear of the chosen horse, and in a minute the horses' feet were beating the ground in a wild flight, — and every Bedouin had started up, but too late to do anything, for though they had the camels, no camel could ever overtake those fleet-footed and dear friends of theirs, who were each moment pressing farther away from them on the desert.

When they were past all fear of pursuit, the

children said they were very sorry for the Bedouins, that they had to lose their horses, but the dragoman said that was all right, — they would bring the camels back and the Director of Affairs would return their horses, which would be, in the meantime, well taken care of, but they would be obliged to pay something for having molested the party of travellers. And so all these tourists who had departed from the starting place on camels dashed into it again on the finest horses in the world, — but Mr. Rattles said it was quite time to go home now.

So the bishop placed his hands on the children's heads and blessed them, and Antoinette burst into tears, but as they looked back and waved their hands, they could see that John was standing beside her, comforting her, and Jeanne said: —

"What a good thing it is that now they are married and some day we are to see them again in the United States."

So these tourists travelled overland till they found their sail-boat moored at the shore where they had left it, and sailed away again to The Island Impossible.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AT THE QUEEN'S DRAWING-ROOM

"OH! Mr. Rattles, they are all coming tearing down to the boat," said Rosey Pink, "and the sails must be up, for we are going across the sea."

"Across the sea, is it?" said Mr. Rattles, "and at what part of across the sea am I to land?"

"Somewhere near London. Any way, we are going across to be present at the Queen's Drawing-Room, and this is the day, and we are in a great hurry."

"But where are the captains, Jack O'Nory and Tom Murphy?"

"They are hurrying down, and I ran ahead so that you could know in time."

So by the time all the children had arrived at the wharf, the sail-boat was ready, and they started across the sea.

"What must we do first, when we get to London?" asked Jeanne.

Calleen said, "We must go at once to Ambassador Hay, and we must order our dresses to be sent there, and then go with him to the Queen's Drawing-Room, for you know we must be introduced by him."

So they arrived, and at once went to Ambassador Hay's house.

The Ambassador was very glad to see them and so was Mrs. Hay, who immediately asked after the health of everybody in the United States.

Then the question arose as to the manner of their introduction to the Queen. The children insisted that they must be introduced in a body; that it would be much pleasanter than stringing along one by one and having their names called out. Jeanne thought that a good form of introduction would be for the Ambassador to say: "The children, your Majesty, from the United States;" but Calleen said that would sound as if there were no other children whatsoever *in* the United States, and Mary said they ought to be presented by some name which would mean something.

Rosey Pink asked why it would not be a good plan to be presented as Daughters of the Revo-

lution, "For you know," she said, "that every one of us girls has a right to that title."

But Mary thought that might hurt the feelings of the Queen, and suggested that "Colonial Dames," would be a prettier and more high-sounding name and could not hurt her feelings in the least. So it was decided that the girls would be Colonial Dames, and would wear the dress for Colonial Dames, while the boys strongly objected to being officers of Colonial Wars, because it might oblige them, if they wore a uniform at all (and they wished to wear uniforms), to wear those very unbecoming ones of that time in American history. They said that they would rather be admirals and generals of the present United States Navy and Army.

Ambassador Hay and Mrs. Hay looked on and listened to this friendly altercation with shining eyes and smiling lips. Indeed, they appeared to think that it would be a very fine thing for the Ambassador to have the privilege of introducing these Colonial Dames and these officers of the present United States Navy and Army.

Then the costumes were sent for, and Mrs. Hay took the girls away with her, while the

Ambassador took charge of the boys' toilet arrangements.

Very soon they all met again in the parlor of the Ambassador's house, and their admiration for each other's appearance was very distinctly expressed. As Rosey Pink and Calleen had each owned a great-grandmother who had lived in London and attended Queen's Drawing-Rooms, with her hair dressed high on her head like a step-ladder, and who had been obliged to go in sedan chairs instead of carriages to the Drawing-Rooms, the other children asked them if they did not feel very much like those great-grandmothers, although they had got the better of them by the instantaneous manner in which *their* hair had been elevated to great heights; for the tradition was well known that in those days there were not enough hairdressers to go round, and for that reason many heads had to be dressed the day before, and the unhappy ladies were obliged to sit up in easy-chairs all night so as not to disturb the beautiful arrangement.

"Those were the days of Sir Horace Walpole," said Calleen, "and Lord Bacon, and —"

"Calleen gets mixed," interrupted Jeanne,

"if we let her go on, pretty soon she will say Oliver Cromwell and Sir Walter Raleigh, and those others,—perhaps William the Conqueror."

The boys were very quiet. They said nothing, but the two admirals and the two generals looked at each other and at the Colonial Dames in a very friendly manner.

Then it was time to start for the Queen's Drawing-Room. There was a little delay caused by the Colonial Dames' awkwardness in attending to their trains, but in a very short time Mrs. Hay taught them how to throw the trains over the left arm, where they were to keep them until they entered the Queen's presence.

The children besought the Ambassador to let them be the very last guests whom he should present.

"Let all the other United States people come first," they said. And Mr. Hay consented to let them have their own way about it. So when the time for presentation came, the Ambassador said:—

"Your Majesty, I present these Colonial Dames and these admirals and generals of the Navy and Army of the United States."

Then immediately and suddenly every child said: —

"God save the Queen, your Majesty."

The Queen looked a little curious, and one of the ladies surrounding her said, in a low voice, but audible to the children: —

"Her Majesty is certainly going to have an attack of hysterics."

Mary, who was celebrated for setting everybody at her ease, said to the Queen, that it was a very fine day, and they had had a beautiful journey, and they hoped that her Majesty would some day come over to the United States.

And her Majesty said she would like to do so very much. Then she turned to some of the high ladies surrounding her, and said that she would be pleased to have these Colonial Dames and these officers of the United States Navy and Army a little longer in her presence, and for that reason she wished that they should take places on either side of her, and witness the presentations which yet remained to be accomplished. And Mary, still anxious that the Queen should feel at ease about these matters, said, that this was a very beautiful thought of her Majesty's, for naturally all these things were new to people

from the United States, and she certainly knew that in no other way could they possibly carry away with them such a true idea of a Queen's Drawing-Room.

Jeanne whispered to Rosey Pink and Calleen: —

"Don't you think you had better tell her about the great-grandmothers?"

But Rosey Pink shook her head and Calleen said that the Queen was too busy just now to be interested in great-grandmothers, for indeed every one was coming forward and being presented and then walking backward from the Queen's presence, and some of the magnificently dressed ladies looked very nervous about the management of their trains, which caused the Colonial Dames to take a peep at theirs with apprehension, and to find that they were a good deal bunched up. But some of the ladies, princesses and such, who were standing behind, arranged their trains for them in proper shape and relieved their minds.

As each high personage was presented, her Majesty would spread out her small hands on either side, and say: —

"The United States;" and the Colonial

Dames and the officers of the United States Navy and Army would make low bows and curtsies.

One very splendid Russian, with a name impossible to pronounce, said something to the Queen, to which she answered: —

"Yes, you see I am surrounded and supported by the United States."

Then the Prince of Wales put his gloved fingers together with a little tapping sound and immediately there was a musical fluttering noise of gloved fingers tapping against each other, and somebody said, "Bravo!" and these children, who were beautiful singers, lifted up their fresh young voices and began to sing "God Save the Queen." There was then silence except for these voices, which rose clear and high in the stillness, and as the children took different parts in the music, there was nothing wanting which could make England's national hymn inspiring and beautiful. While the singing was going on, the Prince of Wales gave an order to some high chamberlain standing near, and as the voices sank into silence, a band from somewhere struck up the strains of "Yankee Doodle."

Then ensued the most wonderful silver-toned,

gorgeously dressed, high and mighty aristocratic hurly-burly that has ever been heard or witnessed upon earth, and in the midst of it all every child kissed the hand of her Majesty, and the little United States band slipped out of the audience chamber as quietly as if they had been figures in a dream.

And away and away to The Island Impossible.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE RESCUE

ONE Saturday they had all started out, the boys in the sail-boat without Mr. Rattles, the girls in the row-boat without Remus, both of those captains having been found asleep in the boat-house.

"That's all right," the children said. "We can do very well without you;" but neither Mr. Rattles nor Remus woke up to hear that they were excused.

The children saw, looking in towards the shore, that the hill where they had fixed their flag-pole looked very clear and fresh in the sun to-day, and they concluded that it was because there had been such a terrible rain that it had been washed, and then the high, blustering wind had blown away the leaves which had been lying about there.

"As for the wind," said Calleen, "I thought it would blow the college down, and take us

away somewhere on its wings, and once I thought I heard a gun, as if there was a shipwreck."

"Calleen will have to write a book when she grows up," said Jack.

But when they turned the point and were really at sea, they were astonished to see a large vessel lying at some distance from the rocky shore, and it looked as if it would sink immediately.

"A wreck!" cried all the children, — and a wreck it was.

"Certainly," said Tom Murphy. "She must have been on her way to her wharf in the city, and the wind has blown her on to those sunken rocks, which lie out from the point, and I don't see any one on her decks. They must have come out from the Continent and rescued her passengers and crew."

"Any way, she is sinking," said Ernest, "so it is a good thing that all her passengers *are* rescued."

All the children said that the best way would be to go over to the other side of her and see how she looked on that side, and when they arrived at the other side they found two of her passengers swimming about in the water.

These passengers did not seem to have any particular intentions, — they were just swimming backwards and forwards the whole length of the ship, and they did not seem as much pleased, as it would have been natural for them to be, at the sight of the boats and the children, who were obliged to follow them about for quite a while before they could attract their attention at all, or get any information from them as to who they were, or what they were doing in the water.

One of the swimmers had very pretty yellow hair, which he had managed to keep quite dry.

Jeanne confided to Mary that she thought he must be a Scandinavian.

The girls were very much pleased with him, and decided that they would follow *him* about as he swam up and down, backwards and forwards, and would leave the rescue of the other swimmer to the boys, if indeed either one of the swimmers wished to be rescued; but of that wish they had as yet given no sign. The girls thought that, nevertheless, it would be pleasant to get into conversation with the Scandinavian. As they considered it would be impolite to at once ask his name, they said instead, "Good morning;"

and the passenger in the sea answered quite politely, "Good morning."

Then the girls did not exactly know what would be the next best thing to say or to do.

Mary, to whom it was natural to try to put everybody at his ease, said:—

"It is a fine day."

But the passenger in the sea did not agree with her at all; he said, that if *she* thought it was a fine day, he would not be so impolite as to say it was not, but for his part he did not consider it so: it was very cold and very wet, and though he was taking exercise just as hard as he possibly could, he did not seem to get warm at all, though, to be sure, he had lashed the water about till it *was* a little less freezing cold than it had been in the middle of the night when the ship had suffered wreck.

Jeanne, who was gazing at his beautiful hair, asked where the other passengers were and the ship's crew.

"They have been rescued," said the man who was taking all this exercise. "There are only two left beside myself, — one of those two, the lieutenant, is also taking exercise in the sea, as I am doing. We were both occupied examining

the hold when the passengers were taken off. I don't know where the other one, the artist, is. I know that just before we struck he was painting an execrable picture of some waves which looked as if they were made of lead-colored cotton batting with bits of white cotton batting stuck on the top of them, — he may be doing that still for all I know. I 'm sure he was not rescued, for I saw him afterwards, when they were all gone away, and I advised him to come down and take exercise with me. He said he did n't think this a good way to get warm, and he was sorry that when the rescuers came he had been too busy examining his picture to show himself."

The passenger went on to say that the lieutenant and he had been taking this exercise pretty nearly all night, and certainly all the morning, but they did not seem, either one of them, to be getting very warm. All this conversation was going on while the girls were rowing their boat up and down and the passenger was swimming apparently for dear life.

Then the lieutenant joined the party, closely followed by the boys, who did not seem to have entered into conversation with *their* passenger.

The Scandinavian stopped a moment to introduce his companion.

"This is the lieutenant," he said, "and you are?—"

"The girls," answered the children. "The other boat-load is composed of the boys."

The boys took off their hats.

"But you have not yet been introduced to us," said Jeanne, looking at the yellow-headed passenger.

"This is the violinist," said the lieutenant.

"We are glad to see you, Mr. Lieutenant and Mr. Violinist," said all the children at once.

"And now," said the passengers, "we must resume our exercise, as we are getting colder again."

"Just a moment," said the children; "as we have come over to this wreck to see if there were any passengers to be rescued, we think we had better set to work to rescuing you both immediately."

The passengers in the sea seemed to think this was a new and pleasant view of the case; but there was further delay, as the boys and the girls began a discussion as to which passenger should be rescued by the boys, and which by the girls.

Jeanne thought the violinist ought to be rescued by the girls, because they had already become very well acquainted with him, and the boys were quite glad to take the lieutenant, but in the meantime the swimmers were becoming quite impatient. They said they could not wait much longer for that matter to be decided, as they were losing all the advantage which they had gained by their former conscientious exercise, so immediately Jack O'Nory leaned out and took the lieutenant by the hair.

The lieutenant remonstrated. He said that if Jack would take him by the hand it would serve his purpose just as well, if not better, as at any rate his other hand was already on the boat, and he was a little particular about being taken by the hair; so Jack and Tom accommodated him by taking his hand and helping him into their boat.

The violinist had, in the meantime, scrambled into the boat with the girls, and did n't seem to mind shaking himself a good deal, so that the girls received quite a shower bath.

"I do that because I am wet," said the violinist.

"So we supposed," said the girls.

"In the meantime, what is to become of me?" said a voice away up in the rigging of the ship.

"That is the artist," said the lieutenant to the occupants of his boat.

All eyes immediately looked up to where somebody sat perched on a cross-bar with his knees up to his chin.

"Why did you get up there?" shouted the children, speaking about as loud as they would speak if the artist had been seated up on a horn of the moon.

"I came up here," said the artist, "to prevent myself from being drowned, because, you see, if this ship goes down in a respectable manner she will go down straight, and up here I shall be above water, which I should not be if I had stayed on the deck; but I think it is very likely that I should be better off now by coming down and getting into one of your boats."

Sam Holmes said in quite a low voice, "Girls, you had better take the artist." But the girls answered in the same tone, "We don't want the artist. Take him yourselves."

The artist was, at this moment, coming down in a very sailor-like fashion, hand over hand, and he was obliged to get into somebody's

boat, so the girls very quietly slipped away with their rescued passenger.

"That 's cool," said Ernest.

"Yes, indeed," said Tom Murphy; "one has to be pretty wide-awake if he expects to get the better of those girls; but as the artist is very near us, let 's put a good face on it so that he shall feel himself welcome."

The lieutenant smiled. He had a taking face. It was very earnest, very quiet, very warm-hearted.

After the artist got into the boat he was fussy, he said that a great many of his pictures were in his stateroom. He did not believe they could be spoiled yet by the sea, as they were all painted in oils, and most likely they could be gotten out without danger to the rescuer, or to the pictures. He would like to get them, but for his fear that the wreck might go down while he was trying to save them.

"You boys are very quick on your feet, I suppose," said he. "Would one of you like to go in and save the pictures?"

"No, I thank you," said every boy, and Sam Holmes added the information that Tom Murphy and Jack O'Nory painted beautiful

pictures; "and," said he, "I don't care for any pictures as I do for theirs. Ernest, too, makes beautiful drawings of things for bridges and pontoon boats and all kinds of superstructures, and if you are like those boys, you can very soon paint a lot of things again, so I guess we will let those you have already made stay on the wreck."

"Oh, very well," said the artist; "if you don't care to see them I'll have to bear the loss."

So the boat set off on its homeward way, and when the boys arrived at the beach they found the girls and the violinist sitting on logs in the sunshine, and the violinist said he was quite dry, and quite warm and comfortable.

He and the lieutenant appeared to be good friends.

"I hope you feel rested," said the lieutenant, "after our long exercise."

"I am more than rested, I am delighted, and if you want to get warmed up and quite happy, just sit down on this log and make the girls talk to you; they are very good fun."

The artist said that for his part he would hurry away and get to some comfortable house, for though he had not been in the water, he

*had* sat up in the rigging for the greater part of the night and all the morning,— he felt very stiff in his bones, and it was quite incumbent on him not to get the rheumatism, as one's fingers are valuable to an artist, and he was quite sure that if rheumatism did attack him his fingers would be the first victims.

The children told the artist that he could not find a boarding-house or a hotel nearer than in the city on the Continent.

"If you go across the bridge, you will be in the city, and it is just jammed and crammed with boarding-houses."

"All right, I will go, then, and to-morrow I will come over and look at the pictures of which one of you boys was speaking."

"It will take you some time to rest, Mr. Artist," said Jack O'Nory; "and I don't think it would be worth your while to look at our pictures."

"Perhaps not," said the artist; "I will bid you good-bye now, and go to some place where I can be comfortable."

The violinist said, after the artist had gone, that he had not thanked the rescuers at all, nor indeed for the matter of that had he or

the lieutenant done so, but they must be sure that they did thank them with all their hearts; — he said that he did not think the loss of the artist's pictures was anything to be sorry about. "You see," said he, "his doctrine is that if you are going to paint a ship, you must not make it look like a ship, but you must give out a little suggestion that it might possibly be meant for a ship, which will set the imagination to working, and so be useful to the observer."

"Oh!" said the boys.

The violinist said that he would rather not go over to the Continent; that the girls had told him about The Island Impossible, — and it seemed so pleasant here, he would like very much to be an inhabitant, and certainly in the college there ought now to be courses of musical education, and he wished to be a professor of music there, if the thing could be managed; and then he looked at Jeanne's smiling, friendly face.

The children were silent, though the girls looked with inquiring eyes at the boys.

Then the lieutenant spoke. He said he had been told that there was, near this city, a fine location for a naval school, and had been sent

to inspect it. That he did not see where that location could be if it were not on this beautiful Island.

The children were silent, but the boys and the girls looked at each other with inquiring eyes; the air was very still, and the birds were singing. Mr. Rattles and Remus at a little distance were taking the oars out of the boats and furling the sails; close to the children's feet the waves were coming in with a little song of their own.

At last Rosey Pink said, "I wish somebody would say something."

"I think Tom Murphy had better say it," said Mary. Then Tom looked at the other boys and they nodded their heads.

Tom rose up and came over to where the lieutenant was sitting.

He said, "Mr. Lieutenant, this is our Island, and we cannot give it up to the government, but we like you very much, and you are one of the defenders of the United States. If you choose to build a naval school next to the college you are very welcome to do so; but the Island belongs to us, and if you build your naval school, you will have to abide by the

same rules that we insisted upon for our college, — that the scholars must not come inside the Island, — that they must cross the bridge coming and going to the naval school."

One of the children said, "They may come on invitation, you had better say, Tom; for instance, like Margaret Parker."

"Margaret Parker is all right," assented Tom. "Her real home is far away, and when she gets homesick she asks her aunt if she may come over here, and as Ernest always takes care of her, she is very welcome, and I think, Mr. Lieutenant, that we should be pleased often to have your society as our guest (here Jeanne made motions with her eyes towards the violinist), and the society of the violinist, who will, of course, have no difficulty in forming his classes in the college."

The lieutenant and the violinist said they would be very much pleased with the arrangement the children were willing to make.

And they became quite loving friends to these young inhabitants, and often they joined them in their walks through the woods and on the shores of the beautiful Island Impossible.

Tom and Jack were forever inviting the

lieutenant, while the girls took possession of the violinist, who soon counted Jeanne amongst his pupils.

. . . . . .

Jeanne's progress was wonderful, and pretty soon she began to make such beautiful music with her violin that the fathers and mothers and the dear auntie on the Continent were much astonished and delighted.

The lieutenant was anxious that Jack and Tom should go into the naval school and become officers in the United States Navy; and the boys were much influenced by him, for though their tastes were so strong for painting pictures, each felt that he must also take up some other profession.

Tom's mind, however, seemed to turn more to scientific subjects, and the professor used to say quite often, "You, Tom Murphy, must be a professor of science in the college, just so soon as we widen our field."

Jack's heart was on the sea, so far as professions go.

## CHAPTER X

### AMONGST THE HOP-PICKERS

THE children were in the sail-boat one afternoon, — a fair, sweet summer afternoon, so quiet on the water, so blue in the sky.

A sloop came along with three men in it and a couple of women. The sloop sailed close enough to hail their boat.

"Do you want a job?" said one of the men.

"What kind of a job?" asked Jack O'Nory.

"Hop-picking."

"What do you suppose hop-picking means?" said Rosey Pink to Tom Murphy.

"I don't know anything more than a baby does about hop-picking," answered Tom.

In the meantime Jack and the man on the sloop were getting into a conversation.

"Hop-picking," said the man, "is picking hops, — beautiful green, spicy, scented things, which are used for making beer. When it comes time for picking them, no delay can be

allowed, otherwise they must become worthless. We generally have an army of pickers, but this year, because we did not make our arrangements early enough, another hop farm has engaged all our men and women and children. I am out looking for new workers."

Jack said, "Are those new workers whom you have in the sloop?"

"They are," said the man.

"I don't think we will take the job," said Jack.

"How many are there of you?" asked the hop man.

"Eight."

"Well, you had better let some of the others speak. Maybe they won't all agree with you about not taking the job."

But Rosey Pink said, "We all *do* always agree with Jack O'Nory, and all you children who have been listening to this conversation and observing the women in the sloop, what do you say about it?"

All the children shouted out, "We don't want the job."

Another man in the sloop began to talk.

"It is a very clean business, and the pickers

are paid according to the number of bushels they pick. You children look as if you might be very handy and earn quite a little pocket-money every day."

"We don't care for pocket-money. There are no shops on The Island Impossible," said Calleen.

"But besides that," continued the man, "it is so beautiful in the hop country; the rivers flow between flowery banks, and the woods are full of singing-birds."

"We have woods full of singing-birds here," said Jeanne.

"But no rivers," insisted the hop man.

"No, no rivers; but we have the sea, and the bay, and the inlet."

"Nothing compared to our rivers."

The women on the boat remained silent. They looked sullen, and the man at the helm did not say a word. He seemed busy listening to the first speaker, who was leaning towards him talking in a low tone, and the sloop was coming every minute nearer to the children's boat.

The children had not put their sail up, — had been just rowing about in the smooth water, and

were now lying quiet, having stopped rowing. They thought the other boat was coming nearer simply for purposes of conversation, but they suddenly found her right at their bow, and by that time the expert hop man had passed a rope through the ring at the bow and was rowing away with them in tow, while the two men at the helm were busy hoisting extra sails.

"That's pretty clever," said Tom Murphy, in a low voice, "and very dishonest."

"They are bound to have us for hop-pickers," said Calleen.

"Is it a rope or a chain they have fastened us with?" asked Mary.

The boys stepped forward to examine.

"It is a chain," they said, "for about a yard and a half, and the two ends of the chain are fastened to a rope. At that distance from our boat we might, if we should hoist our sail, outsail them, and so the chain would slack up and we could reach the rope and cut it."

"Don't let's do anything about it yet, boys," said the girls. "Let's go along as if we did n't mind, and by and by we can hoist the sail and put on more speed, and get at the rope. In the meantime we might take a run up some of those

rivers they were talking about." So the children kept quiet in their boat, while the sloop was a pretty good distance ahead of them, the rope being quite a long one, which now and then, when the wind changed, dipped into the water, so that it would have been easy to draw the chain in and get at the rope to cut it.

"But," said the children to each other, "it is very pleasant going through the water this way, and no trouble in the world, and the rivers might be worth looking at, and as we can at any minute get free, let 's enjoy ourselves here for the present."

Pretty soon they came to a river which truly was beautiful, with the woods reaching down to the water's edge, and pretty summer-houses and open spaces between where children were playing, who called out "Hurrah! Hurrah!" as the boats sailed past; and there were cosy nooks here and there where little row-boats were lying quiet, each with two passengers, who, the children all said, "were lovers." And truly the river was beautiful, and the air was full of lovely smells and the singing of birds.

The women in the sloop began to sing, and pretty soon the men joined in. They did not

speak to the tenants of the boat they had taken prisoner, nor did the children try to attract their attention in any way.

"But truly the singing is beautiful," said Sam Holmes; "and when they stop, let's give them a song."

"What shall we sing?"

"Oh, some lilting thing."

So when the singers in the other boat had ended their song, the silence was broken by these young voices.

Far away on breezy meadows,
  Waiting for our feet,
To and fro the changing shadows
  Dance, and part, and meet.
Singing low, — singing high,
While the dancing shadows fly
  O'er the meadows wide;
While the sleeping shadows lie
  On the mountain side.

Far away on upland meadows
  Lie the coming years.
What have they of lights and shadows,
  What of smiles and tears?
Singing high, — singing low,
Onward, forward we must go,
  Whatsoe'er betide.
And the angels watch, we know,
  On the other side.

When the children's song was ended, and the air was so quiet that one could hear the little slow ripples washing the shore, the people in the sloop began to clap their hands and to say: —

"That is beautiful singing."

"And somehow," said one of the men to the others, "it makes me feel a little sorrowful, and I would like to be a child again."

After awhile the sloop passed out of the river into a canal, which was a strange waterway to these passengers, whose home had always been near the sea.

It was wonderful to see the sloop, her sails having been taken down, enter into this little lane of water, so close to the shores that any one standing on the land could easily stretch out a hand to the people in the sloop and the sail-boat; and really it seemed a sociable kind of way to be travelling, for the houses were close to the water, and everybody seemed to have a word to say to the new boats. A rope from a canal-boat, which looked to the children's eyes like a house, was soon attached to the sloop, while the men aboard the sloop drew up the little sail-boat till its bow nearly touched the stern.

Then some horses which had been standing under a shed started off, and one could see that they were attached to long ropes; and after they had gone a little way, the canal-boat, to which those long reins had been fastened, started off drawn by the horses.

"Well, that is wonderful," said Tom Murphy, —"drawn by horses, but travelling on the water."

And after a time they entered a lock where there was a fence, as if they had come into somebody's yard; and then there was a great splashing and dashing, and they felt themselves sinking down, and did n't know what was to come next. But they passed safely through.

Pretty soon they grew tired of watching the ducks and the geese coming down to swim in this watery street; tired of looking at the pretty curtains in the windows of the houses, and of the people taking their supper under the trees, and they all wanted to go home. But in a short time the sloop untied its tow-line from the canal-boat and entered the river again.

"Mr. Hop Man," said Jack O'Nory, "why did we go into that narrow lane?"

"Because," answered the hop man, "the river

makes such a long turn there, so it was shorter to come by the canal, and easier."

The children's boat was again a long way behind the sloop.

Tom Murphy said, "The next time the wind changes so that the rope dips we must draw it in and cut it in a minute. I hope we can do it when they are are not looking."

"And we will have to go back by the river," said Jack O'Nory, "even if it is a long way round, for I don't think we could tackle that canal business very well by ourselves."

The men on the sloop seemed to be pretty nearly asleep, so when the wind changed and the rope dipped into the water, Tom Murphy, who had a sharp knife in his hand, drew it in quietly and quickly and they were free.

"Look, look!" cried one of the women, and immediately the men were all on their feet. It took them hardly a minute to turn their sloop and go after the children, who had had no time to hoist sail, though they had turned back and were rowing as if for their lives away from their captors.

But in vain, for the sloop soon came up with them, and the three men forced them all to get

into the sloop, while they again attached a line to the little forsaken sail-boat and towed it after them.

One of the women, who looked cleaner and kinder than the other two, said to Tom Murphy:

"What did you do that for? They are very strong and very wily."

"I think they are," said Tom.

After a very dreary time, the sloop drew up at a wharf and anchored with the sail-boat close at her stern. The children were obliged to follow their captors up through a pretty lane, till they came to the hop gardens, where indeed the climbing hops had a friendly look, and their spicy perfume seemed to put new heart into these travellers, who were none of them very easily cast down.

It was supper time when they got to a house, and they were taken into a long room with long tables down the middle of it, and with the queerest company any one could dream of seated at the tables.

There were Indians and squaws and people of all nationalities, and there were many young men and women, who were talking of a dance they were to go to that night, and who seemed

to think that hop-picking was the greatest lark in the world.

But the children felt, strangely and a little sorrowfully, out of place. They longed to be back at The Island Impossible, and would gladly have stolen out and unhitched the tow-line and started off in the moonlight for home; but how small their strength was compared to that of these rough men.

Everything looked picturesque enough, if only they could not have been *in* it, but could have looked at it like a picture, from a distance.

After a while a woman with a white apron and a motherly face came towards them.

"She is the house-mother," said Mary.

The woman said, "Come with me and I will give you a place at the table, but you look tired."

"We are tired," said Jeanne.

Rosey Pink would n't speak. She was altogether too indignant to have any words, — for a set of children to be stolen in this way, she thought was just as bad as stealing men and women from Africa to make slaves of them.

And these people intended to make slaves of them and force them to do work which she,

for one, would not do under the circumstances. She had no doubt that hop-picking might be pleasant work, but not for children who had been treated as they had been. She would not even answer the motherly looking woman, but sat down in the place which was shown to her pretty jerkily. Mary, who had the next seat, put her hand under the table on Rosey's knees, and gave her a little tap of fellowship; so pretty soon that cross girl had to smile a little, while the boys, who were seated on the men's side directly opposite the girls, tried to make the best of it, and Jack O'Nory leaned over to Rosey Pink and said: —

"Rosey, this is a lark."

"Is it?" said Rosey.

"Of course it is. What do you think about it, Tom?"

"I think it is a lark, and a very large one. I don't know whether it is an interesting one or not, but you girls must take your supper, for to-morrow will be a hard day."

"And an escaping day, I hope," said Calleen.

"Pretty soon, when night comes," said Jeanne, "we will be separated. You boys will be put with the men, and we girls — four miserable

girls — will have to go into rooms with all these miserable women, and I wish we were at home."

"So do I," said every child.

After the supper was over, people were allowed to go wherever they chose, but the children knew that if they all absented themselves at the same time, there would soon be search made for them. So they contented themselves walking about amongst the hop vines.

The house was a long, low one with a roofed piazza extending the whole length of it, with pine sofas, which the motherly woman called settles. There were many of these settles, and Calleen said they would make very good beds. The mooonlight made the whole place look very sweet and like a picture, and the hop vines shone like silver. After a while the young men and women started off for the dance, and it did n't seem to the children that there was any account taken of the possibility of *any* one going to bed.

At last, the house-mother came out and said that the beds were ready. The women's beds were put on the floor in the dining-room, stretched along on each side of the tables.

"We have always had good bedrooms before this summer," said the house-mother, "but in the spring the farm-house was burned down and nobody has time to build in the busy season, so we must be content with this for this year, and all the women have to sleep together. The men's room is upstairs, and that is where you boys must sleep."

The boys said, "Thank you," but all the children said they were not yet ready for bed.

After awhile it grew so late that the house-mother came after them again. She said they would have no strength for to-morrow's work, and they had better get all the sleep they could, so that they would be able to earn "a pretty penny." And the children followed her quite disconsolately to the sleeping places, — the girls had to step across many of the beds before they came to those set apart for them; and they all decided that they would lie down dressed as they were. They could not, one of them, drop asleep, so they lay there with their eyes open and holding each other's hands till the people came home from the dance at midnight. And these young women made so

much noise that the other women all woke up, and began to grumble. Then after a while all was quiet, except for the heavy breathing of the sleepers, and the air became very close.

"I am going to suffocate with this air right away," said Rosey Pink.

"I guess you mean *without* this air," said Calleen, "for there is n't a single whiff of air in the room."

"Could n't we get out and lie down on the settles?" asked Jeanne.

"Oh! if we could," Mary said, "but how could each one of us pass over all those sleepers without disturbing them."

"We could if they were railroad sleepers," said Calleen.

Mary said very quietly, "Calleen must have her little joke."

"Pretty good thing that she can in this place," said Jeanne.

However, they decided that they would try for the door, and one by one they stepped across the sleepers.

One young woman was awake. She said quite low: —

"What are you young ones going to do?

Three of you have stepped over me, and now here is the fourth, and you disturb my meditations."

"We are going outside for a little air," said Mary. "It is very close in here."

"I don't blame you," said the woman, who was young and pretty. "It *is* close, and I would go out with you, but I am trying with all my might to go to sleep, so as to feel well to-morrow. I had such a good time at the dance that the thought of it is keeping me awake. When you come back, don't wake me up if I am asleep by that time. Good night."

The girls did not lie down on the settees, as they had expected to do. They sat crowded together. The air was warm and fresh, and they were so homesick that the tears were lying on their cheeks.

Pretty soon they heard a noise overhead, but it did not frighten them as it would have done if they had not already felt so miserable. After a while they heard the noise again, as if some one was creeping on the roof of the piazza, and then something showed itself just at the edge of the roof. Was it a head? Was it a thief? And they stood up together.

"Huh," said the head. "Are you the girls?"

"Yes, we are the girls," they answered in a whisper. "Are you Tom Murphy?"

"I believe I am," said the head. "Were you very uncomfortable?"

"We were smothered. Were you smothered?"

"We were, but that was not the worst part of it."

"What did you have worse?"

"They snored."

"Oh!" said the girls.

"I think we will come down and sleep on those settees."

"You would make too much noise getting down."

"Not a bit of it. It isn't far to the ground, and we wouldn't make any more noise than four cats jumping down."

"Then do for mercy's sake come, for we are very lonely and we are all crying."

"That 's because you are girls. We haven't been crying a bit, but we have been learning to understand how it is that men take to swearing."

"You should n't say anything so dreadful as that."

"Well, girls, there is no use in trying to argue with you in a whisper, and Jack has hold of me by the heel, so I must draw back and explain as to who is on the piazza, and pretty soon you will see us dropping down on the north end, where the grass is very thick and where the sleepers are not so thick."

The girls held their breaths, and at every little noise overhead they were filled with alarm, lest somebody should wake and inquire into what was going on.

Pretty soon one after another of the boys crept up to the settee where the girls were sitting.

"This is a curious kind of a lark," said Sam Holmes; "but Mary, oh! Mary, your face is wet with tears."

"All our faces are wet with tears," said the other girls, "but you don't notice it, Sam."

"Well, just wait a minute. Mary, give me your pocket handkerchief, and after I have dried yours, I will attend to the other girls."

Jack O'Nory said: "We have to whisper here, and we cannot make any arrangement, and you know we have to get away."

All the girls took heart at this speech, and proposed that they should quietly steal away in the grass to an arbor where they would be concealed from all wakeful eyes, and where their voices could not be heard from the house.

So they stole away, and Jack O'Nory said: —

"Of course, we are lonely and some of us *have* been crying, and I am thinking of the dear Island Impossible. And of the lieutenant."

"And," said Rosey Pink, "we are thinking of The Island Impossible, and the violinist, especially Jeanne."

"And we *have* to get away," said Tom Murphy.

"What is to prevent our going down to the boat and getting away now?" asked Mary.

The boys said there was really nothing to prevent, so the children immediately rose and walked through the pretty lane and down to the water's edge, where they found the sloop anchored and their own sail-boat lying at its stern.

But there was a boy asleep on the sloop. He woke up and asked them what they wanted.

"We want to get into our own boat," said Tom Murphy, quite brave when he found that they had only a boy of about their own age to deal with.

"But I have been ordered to take good care of that boat."

"For the owners," said Jack O'Nory, "and we are the owners."

The boy seemed to be a little disturbed in his mind. He scratched his head and said: —

"*Are* you the owners?"

"Yes, we are the owners," spoke up Rosey Pink, "and we are very much obliged to you for taking good care of our boat so far. Now we will take it away, and you can go to sleep in peace."

The boy still looked disturbed. He said nothing but watched the passengers attentively, and saw that they were quite familiar with the belongings of the sail-boat, and the manner of unloosing her sails.

So the little company of mariners started off on their homeward journey, and did n't in the least mind taking the longer way round by the river, though, as they passed the entrance to the canal, they looked with interest at the canal-

boat which was making its way slowly along, while the man who was riding on one of the horses was singing a low, monotonous song, which floated into the air like a song that is heard in a dream.

## CHAPTER XI

### COMMISSIONERS

"WE are commissioners," said Tom Murphy.

"Commissioners to where?" asked the others.

"To some island in the Pacific Ocean. Just as Jack and I were coming round the point, we were hailed by another boat, and an officer in a naval uniform called out: —

"Will you do something for the Government?"

Jack said, "Of course we will."

Then the officer gave us a long string of talk and ended by saying: —

"The United States is very desirous that this island in the Pacific Ocean shall receive immediate information in a matter of importance, and the ships are very slow. But we have heard that *you* can make long journeys in an hour or two, so we thought if you would be the commissioners to carry and present this important document, it would give the Government great satisfaction."

Jack said: "How many commissioners do you want? There are eight of us."

"Eight is a very good number," said the officer.

"Then he handed out these pins and stars and things with which to adorn the eight commissioners — and Jack has the document."

Mary immediately rose to her feet.

"If we are to wear these pins and stars and things," she said, "we must all go and make ourselves otherwise beautiful before we start."

Jack O'Nory had joined them now, and the boys agreed that it would be right for all the commissioners to look as handsome as possible.

So at last they came down to the pier, gorgeous, and Mr. Rattles said they certainly looked as if they *might* be going to the Pacific Ocean, — or, indeed, to the palace of the Czar, for they were so dressed up that he hardly knew them.

"What do you suppose is the document that is in Jack O'Nory's charge?" asked Calleen.

Nobody could answer, for nobody knew.

"And how shall we know the place when we get to it?" said Mary.

Then it was ascertained that nobody knew that either. Tom thought that perhaps the naval officer might have told them about that

in his long string of talk, but he did n't think that either Jack or he had been listening very attentively, and so perhaps they had lost some information which they ought to have received.

"Look at the document, Jack," said Tom.

But the document was simply addressed to "His Excellency the President."

Jeanne suggested that there was a Dutch president somewhere down in Africa.

"One thing the naval officer said very distinctly," answered Jack, "and that was, 'An island in the Pacific Ocean.'"

So after consultation with Mr. Rattles it was decided that they should sail away to the Pacific Ocean and land at the first island they should see which might look as if it had any pretensions to a president, or to being the recipient of an important document from the United States.

Calleen, who was very daring in the expression of her sentiments, said she would like to see the inside of that paper, but the others rather frowned upon her, and for a little while she remained quite silent.

. . . . . .

When they reached the Pacific Ocean they passed numerous small islands, but all agreed

that they were too trifling in appearance for presidents, or important documents.

After a while they saw, in the distance, land. It appeared to be a small continent, with a volcano and other beautiful mountains, with valleys between, and as they came nearer, they could distinguish rivers and dark woods and fertile plains and cities and other islands.

"This is the island," said Jack O'Nory.

"This is the island, sure," said Mr. Rattles, "and we will very soon sail into its harbor."

And when they did sail into its harbor, they found that it was full of ships with the United States flag flying at their mastheads, and there was a great commotion, for officers and soldiers of the United States Navy and Army crowded its wharves and walked up and down its beautiful shaded streets, and many lovely young ladies and dancing happy children walked with them or came out of the houses to greet them.

Mr. Rattles kept his boat tacking slowly in the breeze, till the commissioners should have made up their minds what to do next.

"I don't really know what we ought to do," said Jack O'Nory. "This is addressed to 'His Excellency the President,' and we must not

show it to any one else, and we certainly cannot put it in the care of anybody else, so we must find 'His Excellency the President,' and I suppose for that reason we *must* land even if there does not appear to be any landing-place free at any wharf."

Mary remarked that there were so many flags about with stars and stripes that she certainly felt as if she were in the United States.

"Yes," said Calleen, "and so many soldiers with U. S. on their caps, and all the ships are U. S. ships. Do you suppose that the Pacific Ocean is part of the United States?"

After a while, Mr. Rattles discovered a small pier where they could land.

"I think this pier belongs to private grounds," he said, "but any one who might once see you commissioners would allow that you might land 'most anywhere."

They stepped ashore. Jeanne said: —

"Certainly these are private grounds, and did you ever see such beautiful trees? They don't look like *our* trees, and the soft grass is like velvet. It would be just lovely if the violinist were here, and we could lie down on the grass and listen to his music."

Rosey Pink said: —

"If the violinist were here, *you* would have to accompany him, and all the *rest* of us would lie down and perhaps go to sleep."

"And the lieutenant would be happy here to-day," said Jack. "But you see we have not time to listen to music, or to long for the lieutenant, for it may take us hours and hours to find 'His Excellency the President.'"

"And besides, with all these rigs on," suggested Tom Murphy, "we had better not think of lying on the grass."

So they followed a path through these beautiful shaded grounds, till they came to a splendid mansion.

"I think it is a castle," Mary said, but Jeanne told her that people did not build castles on islands in the Pacific Ocean. They had no time for argument, for almost immediately they found themselves part of a crowd of happy people who were assisting at a feast, where long tables were set out on a lawn, and every one who saw them ran up to greet them, and when they saw the pins and the stars and other decorations, their reception of these commissioners became still more cordial and impressive;

and then they were taken into a banqueting hall, where a major-general sat at the head of a table, and where they were immediately given places of honor, — but not together.

"A funny business to be separated," said Jack. And Tom agreed that it was a kind of dislocating business.

The lady who sat next to Mary, and who was splendidly dressed and wore round her neck garlands of the gayest flowers, took off one of these garlands and put it on Mary's neck, and very soon all the other girls were ornamented in the same charming manner.

"There is to be a ball at the Executive Mansion to-night," said Mary's neighbor, "and you will surely be there, will you?"

"Yes, we are going to the ball," said Mary.

"It will be in honor of the officers of the army and navy who arrived in the ships yesterday, and who are to sail away again at midnight, but — you are young for balls."

"We are all young," assented Mary.

"But you wear stars and other decorations such as older persons might wear."

"We are commissioners," said Mary.

Then the handsome lady was even more at-

tentive than she had been, and Mary noticed that the other girls were getting on very well. Calleen was deep in conversation with an officer who wore a colonel's straps on his shoulders.

"Of course, he must be a doctor," said Mary to herself, "for Calleen would certainly not so soon become intimate with any one who was not a doctor."

Jeanne appeared to be making very wise remarks to an officer with a gray moustache who was sitting beside her, while Rosey Pink was not taking notice of any stranger whatever, — was just sitting with wide eyes, listening to Tom and Jack as they answered innumerable questions as to what people, especially the Government, were doing in the United States now. It was amazing to Rosey, but certainly both those boys were talking as if they were in the habit of *living with* the Government and understanding about every fussy and uncertain and worrying thing, — when, indeed, actually they lived only on the beautiful Island Impossible, where fussy and uncertain and worrying things were unknown.

Sam and Ernest were also talking with great bravery about things of which Rosey was sure they knew absolutely nothing.

"Perhaps it is the pins and stars and things," she said to herself; "but I also am wearing those decorations, and I don't seem to be anybody else but plain Rosey Pink, while all the others look very wise and very important."

There were a great many pretty girls decked with flowers flitting about waiting on the people who were sitting at the tables, both here and on the lawn, and Rosey thought that as no one in particular was watching her at that moment, she would just slip out of her place and help these busy maidens, who received her with a "Welcome! Welcome!" and she soon became as alert as any one of them, and took especial delight in waiting on the gray-bearded officer with whom Jeanne was talking in a little mousey way, and in distracting the attention of the evident doctor in constantly offering things to him, while Calleen was busy explaining some of her theories; and when she came forward with smiles to offer fruits and ices to the boys, they became greatly disconcerted, and lost the self-possession they had so suddenly acquired.

After it was all over, and the commissioners had gathered in a little group on the green lawn, Jack O'Nory said: —

"It will never do to get separated again. We are all to go to the ball at the Executive Mansion, and we must keep together and travel about this charming city together, and look at everything."

"Have we been *properly* invited to the ball?" said Calleen.

Mary thought "Yes," the beautiful lady who sat next to her had asked if she was going to the ball,— so she supposed *she* had been invited; and Jeanne said the general with the gray moustache had invited *her;* while Calleen told the others that the doctor, who had been sitting beside her and who was quite high up in the service and very heroic, had insisted upon her going.

"All those beautiful girls invited me," said Rosey Pink.

The boys knew that *they* had all been invited, but by whom it would be hard to say.

"And, invited or not," said Jack O'Nory, "we are obliged to see 'His Excellency the President,' but where the Executive Mansion is, we do not know."

They agreed that the best thing to do would be to walk about the city, whose windows were

shining in the sunset light, and see everything, and then afterwards come back and rest in the sail-boat at the foot of this lovely garden. After that they could follow some of the officers, for they knew that everybody was going to the ball, and just go in, and as soon after going in as possible it would be better to present "the important document," and then turn away and go home; for though this was a lovely place, and there was a great deal going on, they all thought they would be glad to be sailing into their own harbor again.

"Yes," said Calleen; "and the doctor, and Jeanne's friend, the general, and indeed almost everybody, is going away to-night just as we are."

So when it was evening and all the lamps in the streets were lighted, the commissioners followed a gayly dressed crowd till they came to a beautiful spacious house with broad verandas and lighted windows. It stood in a wide street with open grounds in front. It seemed as if the whole world was going in through its great doorways, and pretty soon the commissioners found themselves shaking hands with "His Excellency the President;" and the President's

wife, who seemed charmed with these new guests, asked the commissioners if they would stand beside her and help her in receiving, "For," she said, "there are so many strangers of distinction here to-night."

After helping to receive for about one hour and a half, Tom Murphy said to the others: —

"It is a pretty hard thing to shake hands with the whole world. How about you others, don't your arms feel broken?"

"Mine feels as if I had paralysis," said Calleen; "and I wish that doctor would come along and tell me what to do for it."

"And my hand," said Rosey Pink, "has gone to sleep."

Mary admitted that *she* had been careful not to shake hands very hard, and Jeanne, who never was disturbed by anything, said that she felt all right.

The other boys agreed with Tom that it was very hard work, especially Jack O'Nory, who had been holding the document so resolutely with the hand which had not been occupied with receiving, that both his arms were now almost useless.

"Just so soon," he said, "as the people have

stopped coming in such a crowd, and the President has a hand to spare, I am going to put 'the important document' into it."

"Yes, do, Jack," said Rosey Pink and Mary; "for we are all so tired, and we are getting homesick."

"Why, Mary," interrupted Sam Holmes, "you talk as if you were almost crying."

Mary told him that she *was* almost crying, and besides, that she was sleepy.

Ernest confessed to being sleepy also.

Pretty soon the people began to come in more infrequently, and Jack got ready to hand in "the important document."

"I suppose you know that you will have to make a speech, Jack," said Tom.

"No," Jack said; he did n't know that he was obliged to make a speech at all, and if anybody had to make a speech, he, Tom, must do it. For his part, he had become so tired holding that precious document, that not only had his arms given out, but also his brain, and if Tom's brain had not given out, he had better begin now to arrange what kind of a speech he was going to make. Tom said: —

"That's all right; but, Jack, we have for-

gotten one thing. If we are commissioners, don't you believe something more will be expected of us than just to hand in the document?"

Jack confessed that that thought had been bothering him all the evening, but they had both been so busy shaking hands as to leave no chance for consulting each other.

"But," added Jack, "we are all tired, and we don't want to stay, so I think the best thing for us to do will be to slip away just as soon as possible after getting rid of the document. They can pick up commissioners anywhere; the world is just jammed full of commissioners."

Tom agreed to this, and when Jack asked, "Ready?" he assented, and the two boys advanced till they were close to the President.

"Don't present it, Jack," said Tom, "until I give you a little tap on the shoulder."

"All right; but for any sake don't make a *long* speech."

"Your Excellency the President," said Tom, "we are commissioners from the United States of America."

"I am glad to see you," said His Excellency.

"And our commission is to hand to you a certain paper."

It seemed then as if the President immediately stood up on the tips of his toes, and his eyes grew very large, while the President's wife did not, for a moment, remove her glance from the faces of the two commissioners. Then instead of Tom's giving Jack O'Nory a little tap on the shoulder, as had been agreed upon, he said: —

"I don't know anything more to say, Jack. Hand the document to His Excellency the President."

Jack put the paper into the President's hand.

By this time quite a little crowd of people who had heard Tom's speech were standing with expectant eyes around the presidential group.

The President, with a trembling hand, opened the document. He turned first very pale, then his eyes filled with tears. The Secretary of War, who was at his side, leaned over and read the paper, whose words were very few. Then the President, whose eyes were shining now, and whose face was bright as if somewhere the sun had risen, took his wife's hand and turned

to the people, who had become silent, waiting for something they knew not what. He waved the paper in his hand, and said: —

"Citizens of the United States of America, I give you joy."

Instantly it seemed as if the whole world had broken out in cheering. Then everybody was shaking hands with everybody else, and the great guns were saluting, and bands of music playing "The Star Spangled Banner" were gathering from every quarter; and as for the commissioners, they were almost lifted up and placed in seats of honor, and everybody was cheering for them.

"Oh, those great guns," said Mary.

"Yes, is n't it beautiful," answered a lady at her side. "They are in the Executive grounds, and they have begun to fire the salute of one hundred guns, and there will be fireworks."

"Oh, oh!" said Mary.

It was all very beautiful and very inspiring, but Sam was afraid that with the salute of one hundred guns and with the fireworks Mary might certainly die; and the boys had their fears that, after all, the whole party might be detained as commissioners, and every one felt

that the happiest moment would come when they were all down at the pier again with Mr. Rattles.

And so in an interval when they were not under close observation the commissioners slipped away, and no one on that beautiful United States island knows, to this day, what became of the messengers who brought the good news to Honolulu.

## CHAPTER XII

### AUF WIEDERSEHEN

ONE day the children were all sitting on the shore in the sunshine, when Calleen said, quite suddenly: —

"We are growing up."

"Oh, no; oh, no," said the others.

Then there was an ominous silence.

"It is abominable," continued Calleen, "but it is true; last Sunday when we went over to the Continent to church, the dear auntie said, 'Calleen, you are growing so tall that your dresses are up to your knees,' — so next Sunday I am to be put into long dresses."

"Did she say anything else?" asked Rosey Pink.

"Well, not much else. When she looked at me there was a kind of little pucker between her eyebrows, and — I think — she said — that I looked gawky."

"Oh, you poor Calleen," exclaimed all the others.

"And the fact of the matter is," said Calleen, "that if I am growing up, all the rest of you are doing the same thing; and it is abominable."

Jeanne suggested to Mary and Rosey Pink that perhaps they all three looked gawky also; and Calleen seemed to find pleasure in believing that as Rosey Pink and Mary were quite as tall as she, they probably had the right to have the same adjective applied to them, while Jeanne, who was not so tall, and who was as graceful as a kitten, would certainly not deserve to be called gawky.

"What about the boys?" asked Jack O'Nory. Calleen answered that "Nobody had said anything about the boys;" but Rosey Pink interrupted to say that in the cars last Sunday, when they were coming to the bridge, she heard somebody say, "All arms and legs." She didn't know of whom that person was talking, but it probably was about the boys.

The boys looked at each other, and they began to whistle softly to themselves, and then remarked that growing up was very inconvenient. Nobody seemed at all anxious to grow up, but they looked at each other now attentively.

They were obliged to notice that the girls were slimmer than they used to be, that their bright faces were more thoughtful, that the boys' eyes were serious, and their lips were more firmly set than in days gone by. So after regarding each other attentively for a few minutes, they agreed again that it was "very inconvenient;" and Mary said the whole trouble about the matter was, that they could not stop growing up now that they had begun that business; that every day they would be getting more and more grown up, and they would be learning every kind of new thing, and that pretty soon separations would come, which would be more than inconvenient — would be simply unbearable.

Then all the children declared that would be too sorrowful, while Sam Holmes said, very softly: —

"I am never going to be separated from you, Mary." And Mary's face looked like a red rose.

And as day followed day after this, they began to watch each other suspiciously, looking for those dreaded growing-up signs; and when the lieutenant had, at last, convinced Jack that he ought to enter the naval school, and the

professor had told Tom that arrangements had been made through which the college courses had been increased and widened, so as to embrace all knowledge under the sun; and Margaret Parker had appeared at lessons with her dress down to the ground, — indeed, trailing a little, — the opinion about the growing up became quite fixed.

Jeanne had, once or twice, gone over to the Continent to accompany the violinist at what were called parlor concerts; and as the parlor concerts were attended by all the friends of the children, of course these same children were there too, and they could not resist the impression that Jeanne had grown taller, and that she handled her violin in such manner that all shyness and too great youthfulness had departed from her.

Calleen had hurt her foot quite a good deal one day, which injury called for the help of a doctor, — a young and very pleasant doctor; and after that she seemed to require occasional help frequently, and had a great deal to say about the fibula and the adjacent muscles and other bones and tendons, and it was thought she took more interest in the healing of her foot than the

doctor did, naturally, one might say; but the conclusion was that they took more time about it than the hurt called for, and at last Calleen's firm decision was arrived at, that her vocation was to take a course in medicine. The pleasant doctor looked dubious, but Calleen had made up her mind.

Ernest was sorry that they had not built a polytechnic school on the Island, as he certainly intended to be an electrical engineer, but there did not seem to be opportunities for any more colleges of any kind on The Island Impossible; and when Margaret Parker said that in the city where she lived — farther west — there was a splendid polytechnic institute, and that after she had finished her education here she was going back to her home, Ernest seemed to be quite satisfied to go through the classes in their own college that would fit him, later, to enter the electrical course in that city in the West.

Sam's aspirations were for a business life, and the college here would furnish him with all the education he desired, and Mary rather encouraged him in these conclusions.

As for Rosey Pink, when she was not career-

ing about with Tom and Jack, or advising them, or sympathizing with them about something or other, she was a hard student, and the professor said he knew that when she should have passed through the examinations next year she would be a Ph. D.

All these children who were growing up so fast had a great admiration for each other, and were so close in love and sympathy, as well as in every kind of mischief, that any one looking at them might indeed feel sorry if separations must come; but they made up their minds that even if they were ceasing to be children, they would take no notice of that fact: they would still be children to each other.

And Anno and Roscoe went on waiting on them and interfering with them just as if the girls had not begun to turn up their back hair, and the boys had not begun to have little dark, downy marks about their lips.

But time is a cruel old bird; he flies very fast, and as he flies he picks up one and another and sets them down sometimes very far apart,—drops the children in different fields and cities and shores, and the worst of it is, there is not a bit of use in trying to argue with him: he flies

away while one is getting ready to explain that these doings are very unwelcome.

. . . . . .

Jack and Tom were walking one day with the lieutenant, who was talking in his low, musical but earnest voice, and telling of other countries and of the wonderful great deeds that were performed on the ships of war when there was trouble because great wrongs had to be made right, and as he spoke his voice became enthusiastic and his eyes were very bright, and Tom, looking at Jack, noticed that his eyes shone just as the lieutenant's did. When the lieutenant had gone away, Jack and Tom walked along together quite silent. At last Tom said: —

"What is it to be, Jack?"

"I think, the navy."

Again there was silence for awhile, then Jack asked: —

"And you, Tom?"

"I think, the scientific course."

After awhile Tom said, speaking very slowly, "To be separated even in our studies is a bad business, and what will it be by and by. Now we have the studio, and our painting together, and the daily life; but oh, Jack! oh, Jack!"

"Oh, Tom! Oh, my Tom!"

When they came down to the harbor Rosey Pink was sitting on the beach waiting for them. There was a question in her eyes, and Tom answered it.

"It is to be the navy, Rosey."

She did not speak, but stood up beside the boys. She laid her head on Jack's shoulder, and after awhile he turned and clasped her hand and Tom's. "This must be our motto," he said: "Hand in hand; shoulder to shoulder; heart to heart, though the seas separate us."

And the others said: "Hand in hand; shoulder to shoulder; heart to heart, though the seas separate us."

So the matter was decided, and Jack O'Nory's name was entered on the books of the naval school, while Tom's scientific course began, and Rosey Pink had commenced her last studies before she should take the examinations, after which she was certain to become a Ph. D.

. . . . . .

And there came an evening which was to be their last of full companionship.

To-morrow, wagon loads of stone and mortar and lumber would come across the bridge right

into the heart of The Island Impossible, in preparation for the new navy yard.

To-morrow the dear old college would be emptied of its belongings, and the new college on the Continent would be opened, — the college in which Tom Murphy was a professor and Rosey Pink had become a Ph. D., and where, also, a studio had been granted to Jack and Tom, on whose walls all the pictures they had painted were hanging side by side.

To-morrow Anno, who had married Roscoe, was to become possessor of the children's housekeeping belongings, and move them over to the new college, in which Roscoe was to be janitor.

To-morrow there were to be two brides, — Mary and Jeanne; and two bridegrooms, — Sam and the violinist. And this little colony of grown-up children, including even the brides, was very sorrowful.

They had walked together in the clear moonlight to the hill where they had christened The Island Impossible, "For," said Tom Murphy, "we must now give it another name, 'The New United States Navy Yard.'"

So they stood close together while Jack O'Nory broke the crystal vase of pure water

upon the ground, and they all cried out at the same moment: —

"New United States Navy Yard, we christen you, and say, 'Good luck! Good luck!' and may the ships that sail out of your harbor be the best on all the seas, and may their officers and their sailors take for their motto, 'To do our best in the sight of God.'"

"Somebody always has to make a speech," said Calleen.

Rosey Pink said, "Wait a moment, for I see the lieutenant and the violinist coming this way; one of them must make the speech."

"Oh, yes; oh, yes."

So when the lieutenant and the violinist joined the children, Tom Murphy said: —

"Lieutenant, you know how sorry we are to-night, for the parting time has come. Will you say a few words of good cheer to us, for it is with you that Jack O'Nory is to sail away across the sea, so it is you who must try to comfort us."

The lieutenant said: "Be of good cheer, you dear children, who brought us to this happy shore. You are, every one, under the strong and tender care of the King of kings, and He will keep you together in love and sympathy.

Resign each other into that high guardianship, sure that you shall be still comrades, doing the work He gives you to do, and loving each other always as you love each other to-day."

The violinist cried out: "Oh, dear heart, my sweet Jeanne. I am like you, sorrowful for the parting; though 'I am looking forward to the happy days together,' — and you 'dear others,' what can we do without you all? Let us say to each other the sweet, old German words for farewell, which my mother used to say, 'Auf wiedersehen.' They mean, 'may all that is best be yours till we see each other again;' but, Jeanne, how glad I am that I must not say to you, dear heart, 'Auf wiedersehen.'"

Then the lieutenant and the violinist went away together down the hill. Some one said: —

"Let each one of us pray every day the prayer that shall keep us together; the prayer that the bishop said last Sunday, when he laid his hands upon our heads in the confirmation service."

"And for the first time, together," said Jack O'Nory.

Rosey Pink slipped in between Jack and Tom, she laid their two hands in each other and clasped hers around them. So all the children

stood with clasping hands and uplifted eyes and said: —

"Defend, O Lord, us, Thy children, with Thy heavenly grace, that we may continue Thine forever, and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until we come unto Thy everlasting kingdom."

Then they came slowly down the hill and stood on the shore of their harbor, with the memories of those other cheery, dancing days filling their hearts.

"Many a night," said Jack O'Nory, "we have fallen asleep here on the sands."

"Yes," said Tom Murphy, "and have said to each other, Good night, and Good night, and Good night."

## L'ENVOI.

FAREWELL to the wond'rous fleets
That sail to Impossible Lands,
Farewell to their cities' happy streets,
And their oceans' shining sands.
Fair lands,
Good night.

They lie on the other side
Of the fields where the poppies grow,
And in their harbors wide
The singing waters ebb and flow,
Low, low,
Good night.

## THE WINDS, THE WOODS, AND THE WANDERER.

**A Fable for Children.** By LILY F. WESSELHOEFT, author of "Sparrow, the Tramp," and "Flipwing, the Spy." With illustrations. 16mo, cloth. Price, $1.25.

**LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY, Boston.**

# NONSENSE BOOKS.

"THERE WAS AN OLD DERRY DOWN DERRY," ETC.

## By EDWARD LEAR.

COMPRISING

"A BOOK OF NONSENSE,"
"NONSENSE SONGS, STORIES," ETC.
"MORE NONSENSE PICTURES, RHYMES," ETC
"LAUGHABLE LYRICS," ETC.

With all the original illustrations. In one square 16mo volume. Handsome cloth. Price, $2.00.

---

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY, BOSTON.

"The man taught him to beat the drum."

## THE JOYOUS STORY OF TOTO

By Laura E. Richards.

With Illustrations by E. H. Garrett. 16mo. Price, $1.00.

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY,
Boston.

# Louisa M. Alcott's Writings.

## THE LITTLE WOMEN SERIES.

**LITTLE WOMEN**; or Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy. With Illustrations. 16mo. $1.50.

**LITTLE MEN.** Life at Plumfield with Jo's Boys. With Illustrations. 16mo. $1.50.

**JO'S BOYS AND HOW THEY TURNED OUT.** A Sequel to "Little Men." With new Portrait of Author. 16mo. $1.50.

**AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL.** With Illustrations. 16mo. $1.50.

**EIGHT COUSINS**; or, The Aunt-Hill. Illustrated. 16mo. $1.50.

**ROSE IN BLOOM.** A Sequel to "Eight Cousins." Illustrated. 16mo. $1.50.

**UNDER THE LILACS.** With Illustrations. 16mo. $1.50.

**JACK AND JILL.** A Village Story. Illustrated. 16mo. $1.50.

The above eight volumes, uniformly bound in cloth, gilt, in box, $12.00.

## THE SPINNING-WHEEL SERIES.

**SPINNING-WHEEL STORIES.** With twelve initial Illustrations. 16mo. $1.25.

**SILVER PITCHERS**: and Independence. 16mo. $1.25.

**PROVERB STORIES.** 16mo. $1.25.

**A GARLAND FOR GIRLS.** With Illustrations by JESSIE MCDERMOTT. 16mo. $1.25.

The above four volumes, uniformly bound in cloth, gilt, in box, $5.00.

## AUNT JO'S SCRAP BAG.

**MY BOYS.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

**SHAWL-STRAPS.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

**CUPID AND CHOW-CHOW.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

**MY GIRLS.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

**JIMMY'S CRUISE IN THE PINAFORE, ETC.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

**AN OLD-FASHIONED THANKSGIVING.** Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

The above six volumes, uniformly bound in cloth, gilt, in box, $6.00.

## LULU'S LIBRARY.

Three volumes. Each, $1.00. The set uniformly bound in cloth, gilt, in box, $3.00.

## NOVELS, ETC. *Uniform with "Little Women Series."*

**HOSPITAL SKETCHES,** and Camp and Fireside Stories. With Illustrations. 16mo. $1.50.

**WORK**: A Story of Experience. Illustrated by SOL EYTINGE. 16mo. $1.50.

**MOODS.** A Novel. 16mo. $1.50.

**A MODERN MEPHISTOPHELES, AND A WHISPER IN THE DARK.** 16mo. $1.50.

The above four volumes, uniformly bound in cloth, gilt, in box, $6.00.

**COMIC TRAGEDIES.** Written by "Jo" and "Meg," and acted by the "Little Women," with a Foreword by "Meg." Portraits, etc. 16mo. $1.50.

**LIFE OF MISS ALCOTT.** LOUISA MAY ALCOTT: Her Life, Letters, and Journals. Edited by EDNAH D. CHENEY. Photogravure Portraits, etc. 16mo. $1.50.

**LITTLE WOMEN.** *Illustrated edition.*

Embellished with nearly two hundred Characteristic Illustrations from Original Designs drawn expressly for this edition of this noted American Classic. Small quarto, cloth, gilt, $2.50.

---

**Little, Brown, and Company, Publishers,**

**254 Washington Street, Boston.**